THE PERIPATETIC;

OR,

SKETCHES OF THE HEART,

OF

NATURE AND SOCIETY.

BY JOHN THELWALL.

VOL. II.

THE PERIPATETIC;

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BRITISH MUSEUM

NATURAL SOCIETY.

BY JOHN FINLEYVALL.

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THE PERIPATETIC;

OR,

SKETCHES OF THE HEART,

OF

NATURE AND SOCIETY;

IN A SERIES OF

POLITICO-SENTIMENTAL JOURNALS,

IN VERSE AND PROSE,

OF THE

ECCENTRIC EXCURSIONS

OF

SYLVANUS THEOPHRASTUS;

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

VOL. II.

Me verò primùm dulces ante omnia Muſæ,
Quarum ſacra fero ingenti perculſus amore,
Accipiant.—— VIRGIL.

M,DCC,XCIII.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PERIPATETIC.

Corripuere viam interea, quà ſemita monſtrat.
Jamque aſcendebant collem, qui plurimus urbi
Imminet, adverſaſque aſpectat deſuper arces.

VIRGIL.

EXCURSION to ROCHESTER.

MY friend Ambulator, to whom I ſuggeſted my ſuſpicions concerning the deſperate ſituation of poor Belmour's mind, fell immediately into my plan, and by the vivacity of mind with which the excurſion inſpired him, and the fund of general in-

formation which every little circumſtance gave him the opportunity of diſplaying, contributed in no inconſiderable degree, to the furtherance of my deſign; amuſing us on the road with ſuch hiſtorical circumſtances as were any way connected with the different ſcenes through which we were paſſing, and embelliſhing every thing he touched with ſuch aptitude and ingenuity of remark, as could not fail to awaken, in ſome degree, even the moſt torpid attention.

THE STREAMLET.

CRAYFORD, the firſt object of our animadverſions, is a ſmall town, with a ſtone bridge acroſs the river Cray; one of thoſe obſcure and modeſt ſtreamlets which, wind-

winding its tranquil way unmoleſted by the buſy pomps of Commercial Speculation, can have, it is true, no pretenſions to the ſplendor or celebrity which the floating foreſt and the poet's ſong afford, but which, nevertheleſs, is not without its importance in the ſcale of national happineſs: if the fertility beſtowed on the meadows through which it winds may be taken into the account, and the mills it may enable to prepare a wholeſome ſuſtenance for thoſe, who, as they have all the labour, ought, perhaps, to have a larger ſhare of the bleſſings of ſocial union. In ſhort, Grandeur and Oſtentation may boaſt of their copious torrents, and the honours of their wide ſpread waves; but the cup of human felicity muſt be filled at laſt from the little ſpring of peace and obſcurity; and better would it be for mankind that the ſources of *national*, and even of *mental* glory were for ever diverted and dried up, than that the ſtreams of rural production ſhould be impeded in their courſe, or than Corruption ſhould be permited to pollute

their limpid waves. Flow on, then, thou little emblem of rural induſtry! May the herb and the flowret ſtill ſmile luxuriantly by thy care for the flocks that graze reflected on thy brim! and ever as the thoughtful traveller ſtrays delighted on thy banks, may the mill-clack, and the foaming eddy, and the whiſtle of cheerful toil, form a concert not unpleaſing to his ear!

The little river that gave occaſion to theſe reflections, ariſes in the neighbourhood of Orpington, between three and four miles from the ſource of the Ravenſbourn, and after receiving ſeveral ſtill ſmaller ſtreams, particularly one that waters the delightful villa of Foot's-Cray Place, croſſes this road, after a winding courſe of about ten or twelve miles, and pours its little tribute towards the Thames.

I would that I could depart from the banks of this rivulet with theſe agreeable impreſſions only on my mind. But every

ſcene

ſcene is to the topographer a memento of the ravages of ambition, and the miſeries of erroneous policy; and even the humble Cray has not eſcaped the misfortune of diſtinction and renown. It was in the year 457 that her waves were polluted with the blood ſo profuſely ſhed in the deſperate battle fought between the Britons and the Saxons, in which the latter, commanded by the famous Hengiſt, ſo well known as founder of the firſt of the ſeven kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy, completely routed the former: a circumſtance (together with the whole melancholy hiſtory of that ſtruggle) which it is impoſſible to reflect upon without animadverting on the folly and weakneſs of alliances, and other ſimilar modes of calling in the aſſiſtance of mercenary troops; which, under whatever pretenſions they may originally be engaged, never fail, in the end, to be ſubverſive, or, at leaſt, fatally injurious to the liberties, peace, and ſecurity of the *people* who pay them. Convenient tools of Deſpotiſm they may ſometimes be; but they

never yet were the defenders of a free country; and whatever may be the calamitous ſituation of any ſtate, it is always better (for the *people*, at leaſt) to truſt to the iſſue of a brave deſpair, than ſeek for ſuch mercenary aid. To the exertions of this deſpair the Britons were at laſt compelled: but it is notorious that they had recourſe to it too late; and that the conſequences of the timorous policy of Vortigern and his *court* were extermination, perſonal ſlavery, and flight to the barren mountains of Wales. Modern examples have alſo ſhewn us that mercenaries have not eſſentially altered in the principles of their conduct. The Swiſs guards of France were ordered to the frontiers to fight the battles of the nation that ſupported them; the Swiſs guards inſolently refuſed to be put on a footing with French ſoldiers; they were ordered to quit the country; they replied by entering into a conſpiracy for a counter-revolution in the heart of Paris, and attempted to ſeduce the national guards to aſſiſt their infernal project; and the unarmed citizens

(com-

(comparatively unarmed) were reduced to the deſperate alternative of exterminating an army the court had been permitted to maintain at their expence. Yet this is what our miniſterial logicians call a maſſacre (though the attack began on the part of the *mercenaries*), which they tell us they know not how to diſcriminate from thoſe of the 2d and 3d of September. For my own part, I profeſs, that, for the credit of the ſacred cauſe of Freedom, I could wiſh the difference were not ſo evident: for when all the circumſtances are fairly ſtated, there is not, perhaps, an Engliſhman, glowing with the glorious love of liberty that warmed his anceſtors, who would not have been aſhamed, under ſimilar provocations, to have been abſent from ſuch a conteſt as that of the 10th of Auguſt.

THE CAVERN.

THERE are alſo, in the neighbourhood of Crayford, ſeveral deep caverns, ſuppoſed to have been hiding-places in the days of barbariſm. Into ſome of theſe, (one of which had the appearance of having been lately worked as a chalk pit,) Ambulator and myſelf, had the curioſity to enter; and were not a little ſtruck with their lofty ſublimity. The ſhape of their roofs, had much the appearance of the Saracen, or as it is uſually called, the Gothic arch; and one of them in particular, which conſiſts of three ſpacious apartments communicating with each other by ſmaller openings of ſimilar form, was ſupported by huge maſſes of chalk, that bore ſome rude reſemblance to the old maſſive pillars of the

the real Gothic Architecture. Add to this the greeniſh, dingy hue which time has given to every part of the roof and ſides of theſe Caves; and they want nothing but a pair of huge iron doors, with a little grate at the ſummit, to furniſh a tolerable idea of the dungeons of romance, in which the Giants and Necromancers confined the gentle Knights they had ſubdued:—or, to let Indignation ſnatch the reins from Fancy, in which the Marats, and Monſters, of the preſent day, who diſgrace the cauſe of Freedom by their inhuman crimes, ought to be ſecluded from the face of Man for ever.—

Eternal curſes wait his Crime,——
The monſter whoſe atrocious hand
(When Freedom's patriot ſoul ſublime
Would vindicate an injur'd land)
Firſt lifts, with thirſt of ſlaughter fir'd,
The Aſſaſſin's ſteel, and headlong leads
The frantic crowd to deſperate deeds!——
The frantic crowd, by rage inſpir'd,
Who when the indignant ſpirit flames
With Freedom's or Religious zeal,

Too

Too oft pollute thoſe ſacred names,
And ruſh on deeds which Heaven diſclaims,
And ſhuddering Virtue ſcorns to own:
Deeds that *almoſt* in horror vie
With thoſe that prop the Deſpot's throne,
Or Prieſtcraft's ſable veſture die:——
Deeds that the nobleſt Cauſe profane,
And ſully Freedom's holy train!

I have ſaid *almoſt in horror vie with thoſe that prop the Deſpot's throne.* And I repeat it in the well-founded conviction that, whatever may be the opinions of Reaſon and Humanity, concerning ſome exceſſes of the Pariſian mob, there is not, (nor ever was) a *Deſpotic Government* in the world, which has not been repeatedly ſtained with crimes of blacker horror than thoſe that have tarniſhed the Gallic Revolution: and that too with the additional provocation of having been deliberately perpetrated by the higheſt, and according to general calculation) the moſt refined and enlightened members of ſociety, inſtead of being haſtily committed, in the hour of tumult and danger, by a few of the

the loweſt, and moſt ignorant of the people. With reſpect to the old government of France, in particular, it is ſufficient to mention the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew's, in which ſo many thouſand perſons were murdered in one night, by the command of the *heaven-anointed* monarch, adviſed and aſſiſted by the wiſdom of his hereditary counſellors, and the humane admonitions of the pious miniſters of the *eſtabliſhed Religion*. And all this for no other reaſon than becauſe the miſerable victims profeſſed thoſe doctrines which are received in England as the true Goſpel of Chriſt, and the genuine ſpirit of Divine Revelation.

THE THRUSH.

WHILE we, in the reverend gloom of theſe ancient caverns, were extending this train of reflection, poor Belmour, whom we had gladly excluded from a ſcene ſo improper for one in his ſtate of mind, was indulging his feelings over an object of more tender melancholy. He had found a poor little thruſh laying dead at the door of a cottage, who, from his half-fledged pinions, had been evidently the victim of that propenſity, ſo unaccountably encouraged in the youth of every rank and condition of ſociety, for oppreſſing and ſporting with the felicity and natural feelings of thoſe humbler tenants of the earth, whoſe helpleſs condition places them within the reach of tyranny.—Poor little captive!

tive! he had not lived, indeed, to draw out a lingering exiſtence, and flutter his little hopeleſs wings againſt the bars of an inexorable cage. The proſpect of endleſs ſlavery had broken his little heart; and his impatient ſpirit had fled and diſperſed itſelf in ether, in queſt of that liberty which even its little weight of clay would no longer ſuffer it to enjoy without a ſeparation:—Or, to ſpeak leſs fancifully, it had wanted the careful nouriſhment,—it had wanted the ſheltering wing of an anxious parent, and it had periſhed, miſerably periſhed! for the paſtime of ſome inhuman little tyrant, who will, nevertheleſs, be taught to pray *that he may be dealt with, according to his dealings*, by a Being infinitely more ſuperior to him (if that could be an excuſe for cruelty) than he to this little victim.

How is this cruel propenſity—the philoſopher might perhaps enquire—for philoſophy and ſenſibility are by no means ſo inconſiſtent as the ignorant and the unfeeling

ing would perſuade us.—How is this cruel propenſity to be accounted for among the rational offspring of a benevolent Creator?—Shall we admit the ancient doctrine of an eternal ſtruggle between the contending principles of Good and Evil, by which, however triumphant the former muſt evidently be conſidered, the latter has always been enabled to mix ſome alloy even in his nobleſt works?—Or, if this is not ſufficiently *orthodox*, ſhall we conſider this want of feeling as conſequent of the original fall?—As a weed ſpringing up from the ſeeds of the forbidden fruit of knowledge, plucked by the raſh hand of Eve? But, with all becoming reverence for ſacred authority, I cannot help conſidering almoſt every vice as the conſequence, more frequently, of Ignorance than of Science.—Shall we rather conſider it, then, as the abuſe of ſome juſtifiable principle, which, inſtead of being directed, is too often perverted, by a negligent or improper education?—Were we taught from our earlieſt infancy—for we are capable

ble of being taught almoſt before we are capable of miſchief!—Were we taught that every living thing has the ſame feelings with ourſelves, and that "even the poor beatle trod beneath our feet, in corporal ſufferance feels a pang as great as when a giant dies;"—were the wanton injuries we are committing brought home to our little boſoms by ſuch compariſons as we could comprehend, I own I am not ſo thoroughly perſuaded of the influences of *original ſin* as to believe that human nature would grow up in ſuch cruel depravity, as that which we too frequently behold.

A DIGRESSION FOR PARENTS AND PRECEPTORS.

OF the power of ſuch leſſons over the infant mind, I had once a very ſtriking exam-

example. A little orphan, who was formerly an object of my frequent attention, while amuſing herſelf, one ſummer's day, in my garden, having caught a lady bird and put it into a bottle with ſome graſs, came running up to me, with the innocent vivacity of one unconſcious of a fault, that I might ſympathize in the pleaſure of her attainment. I did not expreſs my diſapprobation immediately; (for perhaps there is nothing in which it is more neceſſary to proceed with caution than in the management of the infant mind:) but when next the little fondling came playfully to my ſide, I took her tenderly upon my knee, and with a tone and countenance of affection, told her I would relate her a pretty ſtory.

"We are informed," ſaid I, "my dear! in a book that you will read, perhaps, before it is long, that at one time there were *Giants* in the world: great tall men, a vaſt deal larger than we are, and ſtrong enough to do as they liked with ſuch little folks as

you

you or I. One of these, I am informed, while he was young and thoughtless, and did not know that we little people could feel, and love liberty and walking about in the gardens, and playing together, as well as himself, had used to catch little boys and girls, which he carried home and shut up in cages and caves for his pastime and amusement; and in this unhappy situation he used to keep them till they died for want of air and food. Was not this," added I, assuming a voice and look of greater seriousness, "a naughty thoughtless giant? And do you think that you or any body ought to love him?"

The tale had precisely the effect I intended. My pretty little pupil hung down her blushing head, slid silently from my knee, and withdrew. Presently, however, she returned with a brightened countenance, to tell me that she had set her lady bird at liberty; informing me, at the same time, that she never had intended to starve

it

it to death, for that ſhe had put ſome graſs into the bottle for it to eat.

"Pretty little innocent," ſaid I to myſelf, gazing on the tender generous tear that was ſwimming in her eyes, as I folded her in my arms and kiſſed her, "what pity would it not have been that the embers of ſenſibility ſo kindly provided by Nature to warm this infant boſom, ſhould have been ſmothered and neglected till the ſpark had at laſt expired! Let me fan it—let me rouſe it with my kindeſt breath, till the ſpreading fire ſhall give warmth to all around it, and attractive animation to theſe little budding beauties! —But my little Felicia muſt be benefited by my inſtructions no more; and whether I ever again ſhall behold her, to ſee the ripened produce of my culture, is matter of conſiderable doubt. Sometimes, however, I pleaſe myſelf with the flattering proſpect that my inſtructions have not been beſtowed in vain; and that to the lateſt of her days ſhe will be a better mem-

ber

ber of ſociety for this kiſs and this harmleſs fiction. Thoſe who can agree with me in the expectation will not conſider this as an impertinent digreſſion; but will readily excuſe me for deſcending from the character of the poet, or the topographer, to relate a little childiſh anecdote, and repeat the fable that fixed the ſportive attention of an infant's mind.

But theſe early cruelties are ſo far from ſhocking the unfeeling maſs of mankind, that they are rather cultivated than diſcouraged: and I have even known a lady, whoſe delicate *ſenſibility* was ſhocked by every "rude gale of heaven that viſited her cheek too roughly," *take the trouble of riſing from her chair*, to catch flies, and pull their wings off, for her little boy; that he might play with them and torture them at pleaſure.

THE THRUSH.—WANDERINGS OF DESPAIR.

WHILE theſe reflections paſſed acroſs my mind, the imagination of the unhappy Belmour was affected in a different manner.

"And is it thus?" ſaid he, holding out the hand that held the lifeleſs bird—"Is it thus?—Is it no more than thus? Poor little wretch! thy miſeries and thy cares are ended!—*Thou* dreaded *Death!* thou doſt not only *taſte* tranquility:—thou art *Tranquility itſelf;* and knoweſt it not. Why what a fool is man to dread thee thus, and clothe thy brow in terrors!—What this?—No more but this? Was ever *Life* ſo tranquil?—Out! out! I'll none of it: my

my hope is here!" preſſing the little breathleſs victim between both his hands.

"Ah bird!" ſighed he, after a conſiderable pauſe. "Poor bird!" ſhaking his head, and regarding it with a look of that melting ſympathy, for which he was once ſo eminent.—"Yet wherefore pity thee? Thy griefs are ended; and no more ſhalt thou be driven an alien and an outcaſt through the air, baniſhed thy native neſt, and expoſed to the maledictions of a cruel parent; nor roving from ſpray to ſpray, in queſt of thy ſevered mate, ſhalt thou mourn that mutual affection ſhould be vain.—This little breaſt:—How quiet! how ſerene!—Yet it has fluttered for its loſt Sophia, and ſighed, and ſobbed, and panted till it ached; and ached, and ached, and throbbed itſelf to ſleep. But, ah! the love-lorn wanderer knows no reſt, but dreams of anguiſh, till he wakes again to tears of real ſorrow. How ſweet is death, then, which alone can give the peace for which we languiſh!"

Tran-

Tranquil Indifference, perhaps, might ſmile at theſe extravagant ravings; but where the affections are intereſted, the ſhafts of apparent ridicule are blunted; and for my own part, I felt too ſtrongly the alluſions of this reverie, not to ſympathize in all the emotions that accompanied it. It were in vain to have told him that the little thruſh never had a Sophia; that it never was driven with curſes from the paternal neſt, or ſought from ſpray to ſpray, with deſponding heart, the injured object of it's mutual love. His diſordered imagination, like that of the unhappy Lear, had transferred his proper afflictions to the object he was addreſſing; and his mind contemplated, as in the incoherency of a dream, the proſpect of his own breathleſs corſe laying inſenſate before him, freed from the tumults of anguiſh he had ſo long endured, and all the torments of diſappointed paſſion! Under the influence of ſuch an imagination, to have reaſoned muſt have been as idle as to have ſtood upon ſome lonely rock in the midſt

of

of the tempeſt and have preached to the raging billows. We hurried him, therefore, along, in the more rational expectation that the phyſical influences of active exertion (whoſe effects on the animal ſpirits every Peripatetic—and every equeſtrian muſt ſo frequently have obſerved) together with the various events and ſcenery encountered upon the road, might obliterate the dangerous impreſſion from his mind.

DARTFORD.—HISTORICAL DISQUISITIONS.

THIS ancient town, fifteen miles from London, is pleaſantly ſituated on the river Darent, over which it has a ſtone bridge, and by the banks of which are ſome very pleaſant walks. This river, which takes its riſe at Weſterham, in this county, flows, in a ſerpentine direction between twenty and

and five and twenty miles, then croſſing the road, at the farther extremity of Dartford, winds about two miles farther, and forming a junction with the river Cray, aſſumes the name of Dartford creek, and enters the Thames at Erith Reach.

Dartford had the honour, which the lovers of literature ought not to paſs over in ſilence, of being the place in which the firſt Engliſh paper mill was erected. It was built by Sir J. Spelman, in the reign of Charles I.

Wat Tyler's inſurrection, alſo, began in this town: an inſurrection which, notwithſtanding the opprobrious epithets of partial hiſtorians, is evidently marked by the modeſty and reaſonableneſs of the demands made by the victorious inſurgents. "A great body of them," ſays the apologiſt for tyranny, Mr. Hume, "quartered themſelves at Mile-end; and the king finding no defence in the Tower, was obliged to go out to them, and aſk their demands. They required *a general*

general pardon, the abolition of ſlavery, freedom of commerce in market towns, without toll or impoſt, *and a fixed rent on lands, inſtead of the ſervices due by villanage* Theſe requeſts," continues the obſequious hiſtorian, "which, though extremely reaſonable, the nation" (the *governors of the nation*, he means) "were not ſufficiently prepared to receive, and which it was dangerous to have extorted by violence," (they ought to have been given, then, before violence was attempted) "were, however, complied with; *charters to that purpoſe were granted them; and this body immediately diſperſed.*" —"The King, paſſing along Smithfield, very ſlenderly guarded, met with Wat Tyler at the head of another body of rioters, and entered into a conference with him." During which, "*Walworth, the Mayor of London, not able to bear his* INSOLENCE, *drew his ſword, and ſtruck him ſo violent a blow as brought him to the ground, where he was inſtantly diſpatched by others of the King's attendants.*" What the nature of this *inſolence* was, which nothing leſs could atone than the aſſaſſination

of the man, who in the very moment when the whole court might have been exterminated at a blow, if ſuch had been his deſign, put himſelf, with honeſt confidence, into their power, it is difficult, however, to determine. Hume is entirely ſilent upon the occaſion; and other hiſtorians ſatisfy themſelves with ſtating that while he was propoſing his demands, ſimilar to thoſe which had been granted to the former party, he ſhifted his ſword from hand to hand, with great apparent confuſion: natural enough, I ſhould ſuppoſe, to a ruſtic, in ſuch unwonted ſociety. The royal hypocrite, though but in his ſixteenth year, felt, however, no ſuch embarraſſment; "He advanced alone towards the enraged multitude; and aſked them, *What is the meaning of this diſorder, my good people? Are ye angry that ye have loſt your leader? I am your King: I will be your leader.*" And ſo he was: for "The populace, overawed by his preſence, implicitly followed him into the fields: being there joined by Sir Robert Knolles, and a body of well armed

veteran

veteran ſoldiers;" (mark his humanity!) "*he ſtrictly prohibited that officer from committing an undiſtinguiſhed ſlaughter;* and peaceably diſmiſſed them with the ſame charters he had granted to their fellows." *But being ſhortly after joined by the nobility and gentry with an army 40,000 ſtrong,* "*The charters of enfranchiſement and pardon were revoked by Parliament; the low people were reduced to the ſame ſlaviſh condition as before; and ſeveral of the ringleaders were ſeverely puniſhed. Some were even executed without proceſs or form of law*"!!! !!! !!!

Such is the faith of courts! and ſuch the weakneſs and the fate of thoſe who, having once grappled with the ſerpent, ſuffer it to depart with unbruiſed head.—I, for my part, am no friend to inſurrections, to unrelenting vengeance, or even to *ſanguinary juſtice;* but I appeal to the knowledge and common ſenſe of mankind, whether the *uniform conduct of all tyrants* has not conſpired to teach the world this leſſon—*that when once you have got them in*

your power, you either muſt lop them off, or they will lop off you? But to turn from reflections which I have hopes will never again be neceſſary in this country:—ſuch are the facts with which Hume himſelf ſupplies us, relative to this affair; and which (though I have ſtripped them of the gloſſing declamation with which that inſidious writer interſperſes moſt of the circumſtances he relates) I have thought proper to recapitulate in his own words; that the reader may be enabled to determine, even upon the moſt favourable evidence, what degree of honour the city of London is entitled to arrogate to itſelf on account of the dagger ſtill worn upon it's ſhield in commemoration of this *Loyal* tranſaction of Sir William of Walworth: with whom miniſterial writers have ſlandered the preſent *patriotic* magiſtrate by an invidious compariſon. +

"This town, alſo," continued Ambulator, "was anciently the ſcene of one of thoſe farces of ſtate, a matrimonial alliance (between Iſabella,

Iſabella, the ſiſter of Henry III. and Frederick, Emperor of Germany) in which the unhappy victims of royal intrigue, like ſenſeleſs automatons, moved by the ſtrings and wires of political expediency, are led, without will or inclination, to the altar, that the tyrants of their reſpective families may fortify themſelves the better againſt the juſt demands of their oppreſſed and deluded people, and hold the rod of Deſpotiſm with a firmer graſp.

"But the time is not, I hope, far diſtant when the eyes of the enlightened nations of Europe will be open to this nefarious policy, and no branch of the family of any Chief Magiſtrate will be permitted to marry but from among the natives of his own country: a regulation which would at once reſtore the injured princes of the blood to that eſſential right of a rational creature, the power and opportunity of fixing and indulging the affections of their hearts in the choice of their deareſt connections, and preſerve the people from many an ex-

penſive

penſive and deſtructive war, into which theſe alliances have ſuch a tendency to plunge them." *

THE MONASTRY.

"BUT look," continued Ambulator, "at yon antiquated houſe—the reſidence, at preſent, as you will ſee, of ſome induſtrious farmer. Houſes, like empires, my friends! have their revolutions, and this has experienced not a few. It was originally a nunnery, founded by the famous patron of arms, of gallantry, and ſuperſtition, King Edward the Third. But Henry the Eighth, who loved his own indolence and voluptuouſneſs too much to leave any body elſe in the poſſeſſion of theirs, turned the poor nuns out of the retreat of their concealed licentiouſneſs, and converted

converted it into a palace for himself. It continued a royal residence till the reign of James I. from whose time, till the present, it has been in a state of progressive degradation; till from the proud eminence of useless or pernicious grandeur, it has sunk to the sordid and contemptible condition of *utility*."

"And why not useful in its original institution?" said Belmour—breaking his melancholy silence, and looking with a mixture of regret and enthusiasm upon the building.—"Why not useful then?—Surely Misery should have somewhere to hide its drooping head from the insulting prospect of those enjoyments it must never taste!—While every other species of distress has its charitable mansion, some retreat might certainly be provided for the keener anguish of the broken heart.

"Away! away! with all this foppery of reason! Can it silence the reproaches of conscience, allay the hopeless pangs of

diſappointed love, or revoke the deep-breathed curſes of an inhuman father! Come then, bleſt Superſtition! come again: and if the ſilly pageantries of prieſts and altars, of blazing tapers and of molten calves, can waken an enthuſiaſm of pious frenzy to whirl this throbbing paſſion from my brain, take me, ye holy cheats! and ſtamp me yours; for all that's true is hateful!"

Notwithſtanding the agitation with which this was delivered, we were not ſorry to find the mind of our unhappy friend in ſome meaſure diverted by the contemplation of another object, however irrational, from the dreadful meditation in which it had before appeared abſorbed. When there is no power in pharmacy to cure a malady, it is frequently gaining ſomething if the ſeat of its ſymptoms can be ſhifted: and the tempeſt and agitation of frenzy is to be preferred to the ſettled calm of deſpair. We endeavoured, from this conviction, to cheriſh, in ſome degree, the

the viſionary proſpect that had ſtarted ſo unexpectedly in his imagination. And for this purpoſe enumerated, with every epithet of honour and commendation, the various celebrated characters who had hid their afflictions from the perſecuting eye of the world, and found a melancholy conſolation in the gloom of the convent.

He liſtened with greedy attention; and I could not but obſerve that his eye preſently became animated, and his whole countenance began to aſſume that appearance of eagerneſs ſo common to perſons of lively feeling when any new and intereſting object of purſuit is ſtarted.—"But why a convent?" ſaid he. "Miſeries like mine require a darker gloom. Some ſullen cave, like thoſe you have been viſiting, but ſecured from the unwelcome intruſion of human footſteps, by the thick gloom of ſome trackleſs wilderneſs, might better 'ſuit the gloomy habits of *my* ſoul;' where birds of night ſhould pour the only ſtrain that mingled with my ſighs, and hollow

groans, and waked long ſlumbering Echo from her den, to ſcare the woodland phantoms, that, unſeen, ſcatter their blaſting mildews as they dance; where crawling newts, and the ſlow loathſome toad ſhould form my ſole ſociety; and rocks and woods ſhould tremble night and day to hear my invocation.—

"Come, black Deſpair! pervade my gloomy mind!
To thee, to thee, I yield my tortur'd ſoul.
Vain phantom, Hope! I give thee to the wind:——
Come, Stygian fiend! whom endleſs fears controul.
As broods the mangled ſerpent o'er his wound,—
As lurks, in ivy'd nook, the caitiff owl,
Nor dares, while beams the ſun's broad glare around,
Wake the ſcar'd echoes with her murd'rous howl.
So, ſullen fiend! to this dark cavern flies
The man of crimes—by hopeleſs pangs oppreſt.—
Fiend! thou art here.—How ghaſtly glare thy eyes!
While thy chill touch congeals my ſhuddering breaſt.
Come, endleſs Night! thy thickeſt mantle ſpread!
Ye kindred horrors! ſhriek around my head!"

The vehemence with which this was delivered in ſome degree alarmed my fellow traveller; but, for my own part, having fallen ſeveral times in converſation with perſons

perſons occaſionally viſited by temporary fits of extravagance, I have learned to conſider them as perfectly innocent, and to leave them to their own correction.

DARTFORD BRINK.—MEMORIALS OF ANTIQUITY.

ENGAGED in this converſation we aſcended between the hanging precipices of ſand and gravel that bound the road on either hand, and which, ornamented with coppice and ſaplings, have a tolerably picturesque appearance. This is in ſome degree heightened when you arrive at the top of the hill, by the proſpect of the church-yard, which lays upon one of theſe precipices by the road ſide; not only at a conſiderable diſtance from the church, but alſo conſpicuouſly higher than the ſummit

of the ſteeple. And indeed from the ſteepneſs which (notwithſtanding the labour that has been exerted to correct it) the road ſtill retains, we could not but reflect that were the funeral ſervice to be performed by ſome fat pluraliſt—ſome pious monopolizer of the *grace of inſpiration* (without which, we all of us very well know, it is impoſſible to be a member of the *Eſtabliſhed Church*) it muſt be ſomewhat doubtful whether, by the time he had accompliſhed the Herculean labour of the aſcent, breath enough would be left him to diſcharge the pious office ſo eſſential to the future tranquility of the departed ſoul. But the manes of the dead are in danger of no perturbation on this account. The ſacred ſpell ſhall be breathed over their aſhes, and the gates of ſalvation unfolded by ſome leſs unwieldy mediator. In the church, as in every other department in this country, the *real ſervices* are performed by deputies, who are too ſlenderly paid to find their own weight an incumbrance; and the nominal officer has no other trouble than receiving

is a ridiculous & darkened attack
the Clergy, & having attacked all establish
is a pretty strong symptomatic of

ceiving the emoluments, and *ſupporting the dignity* of his ſituation.

But the ſcene of ancient pageantries and of ancient faction now preſented itſelf before us; and in croſſing the celebrated common of Dartford Brink we were reminded not only of the ſportive and pompous tournament held by Edward III. in the year 1331, but alſo of the fatal tragedy of the houſes of York and Lancaſter; the firſt act of which was performed upon this theatre, A. D. 1452; when Edward Plantagenet brought into the field an army of ten thouſand men, whoſe idle frenzy prompted them to hazard thoſe lives which ought to have protected and ſupported their families, in a ridiculous conteſt for *a change of maſters*. But every part of this kingdom preſents ſo many memorials of the horrible maſſacres by which the *Rights of Kings* have been maintained that I ſhall not at preſent dwell upon the ungracious ſubject.

Dart-

Dartford Brink, or Dartford Brent, as it is ſometimes called, perhaps with more propriety, is now the ſcene of more innocent exploits; being the field in which the ſkill of our great cricket players is frequently tried, and in which the Kentiſh bowmen diſplay their ſtrength and adroitneſs in the uſe of the once famous weapon of our Engliſh warriors. The latter of theſe gentlemen had, in one of my excurſions upon this road, a kind of encampment for the purpoſe of refreſhing the archers between their trials of dexterity; and I confeſs I felt a glow of national vanity at the proſpect, and the contemplation of the growing popularity of an amuſement ſo connected with the ſtudy of antiquities, and the hiſtory and manners of our anceſtors.

Victorious weapon in the fields of Fame!
To which the Briton's ſinewy arm applied
Sped the long ſhaft, with never-failing aim,
And the white wing in hoſtile crimſon dyed!

How

How oft (when martial glory urg'd the ſoul)
Our Richards, Henrys, Edwards prov'd thy force:
Whoſe race, reſiſtleſs, to Ambition's goal
Outwing'd thy glowing arrow's fatal courſe.

E'en now, as diſtant ſcenes, and viſions old,
The magic powers of Fancy, pleas'd, renew,
Rank urg'd on rank, victorious, I behold
The gallant bands their ſcatter'd foes purſue.

Here bold Croiſaders, urg'd by holy zeal,
Spread ſwift deſtruction thro' the impious band:
The ſtrings reſound; and gaſping myriads feel
The diſtant vigour of the archer's hand.

See Cour De Lion o'er the ſlaught'ring field,
Like Mars himſelf, directs the ſhafts of fate:
Whole nations ſhout: the gall'd battalions yield,
And hovering Ruin threats the Pagan ſtate.

Full in the van of Conqueſt's bold career
Britannia thunders, and her ſons purſue:
All Europe throngs tumultuous in their rear,
To ſhare their triumphs, and their labours view.

'Twas thus our bowmen, in the days of yore,
In Glory's fatal ſtrife unequal'd ſtood:
O'er Aſia's fields their conquering banners bore,
While the pale Creſcent ſunk in ſeas of blood.

But where, my Muſe, on mad Ambition's wing,
Where ſpeeds thy flight? to what diſaſtrous clime?
The flattering incenſe of thy praiſe to fling
On War's fell altar, ſtain'd with every crime!

What

What is this Glory, nurſed in deeds of death?
The ſcourge, at once, and idol of the world!
Who breathes—and plagues and famine wait her breath:
Who ſpeaks—and round are blaſting thunders hurl'd.

Ah! would to heaven that Wiſdom's awful voice
Might 'midſt the clamours of her train be heard!
That Reaſon's dictates might direct our choice,
And *Truth* and *Virtue* be alone rever'd!

How might the Toil—the Genius oft employ'd
To ravage realms and thin the human race,
Have made whole deſarts ſmile in uſeful pride,
And deck'd ev'n barren rocks with Culture's grace!

How might that wealth which War's inhuman trade
Has oft abus'd, to aggravate Diſtreſs,
Have chac'd the gloom from Miſery's friendleſs ſhade,
And taught Deſpair the liberal hand to bleſs.

Yes Glory, yes—had it thy triumph been
To heal—not wound, to cheriſh—not deſtroy:
Thro' many a waſted realm how chang'd a ſcene
Had met the ſage's meditative eye!

Then had we ſeen, inſtead of burning towns,
Of fields laid waſte, of horrid piles of ſlain,
And all that Hiſtory ſhudders while ſhe owns,
Fair ſmiling Peace, and Plenty's ſylvan reign.

Then, as thy chariot roll'd ſublime along,
No Orphan's curſes, nor no Widow's tears
Should mix, diſcordant, with the ſhouting throng,
And pour their anguiſh in thy wounded ears.

Inſtead of theſe, to ſtrew thy peaceful way
With flowers, and fruits, and leaves of holy palm;
The village youth before thy ſteeds ſhould play,
And Love and Muſic breathe the mingled charm?

There, too, ſhould Commerce pour her buſy train
To hail thee paſſing;—and each artiſt band,
And all who pant the laurel wreath to gain
Of liberal Science, laud thy high command.

But chief the Muſe, ſweet ſoother of my care!
Her grateful voice ſhould lift with fond acclaim;
With honeſt pride thy ſplendid triumphs ſhare,
And ſwell the chorus of thy guiltleſs fame?

THE GIPSIES.

THESE political reflections, which I confeſs I have in general a tolerable inclination to indulge, were preſently interrupted by the appearance of a ſturdy-looking youth, whoſe dark eyes, olive complexion, and peculiar caſt of feature proclaimed

claimed him of that race of wanderers, or *peripatetics*, to whom the name of gipſies has been univerſally beſtowed: though the popular opinion of an Egyptian origin, by which the appellation has been uſually accounted for, is now, I believe, pretty generally abandoned by thoſe who are verſed in hiſtorical diſquiſition; and Grellman, a German author, who has paid conſiderable attention to the ſubject, and whoſe diſſertation has, within theſe few years, been tranſlated by Mr. Raper, of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, has ſupported the opinion, to ſay the leaſt, with conſiderable plauſibility, that their original emigration was from the country of Hindoſtan. But whatever doubts may hover over this inveſtigation, there is another part of the hiſtory of theſe people, by no means leſs curious or intereſting, about which I believe there is no diſagreement—the immutability and uniformity, I mean, of their manners and diſpoſitions: in which neither time, nor climate, nor example has hitherto produced any conſiderable

ſiderable alteration. For the ſpace of three or four hundred years they have been wandering about like pilgrims and ſtrangers in all the different diviſions of the ancient hemiſphere; yet the torrid ſuns of Africa have never *deepened*, nor have the cooling gales of Europe *corrected* the peculiar die of their complexions. They neither learn in Spain to be indolent, nor diligent in Germany; and the *impoſtures of Mahomet* and the *divine myſteries of Chriſtianity* are equally deſpiſed by them, or neglected, in the midſt of the deſpotic ignorance of Turkey, and the regions illuminated by the pure ſunſhine of Goſpel Revelation. On every ſide of them theſe miſerable tribes of wandering robbers behold the fixed inhabitants, the comfortable dwellings, and all the accommodations of ſettled and regular ſociety; yet theſe and their allurements they ſteadily reſiſt, and (with all the inveterate attachment to the prejudices of ancient precedent and anceſtral uſage, which the political wiſdom of our rulers would ſo piouſly recommend to our

† By these words being in Italics the peripatetics meaning is totally

our imitation) they perſevere to the laſt in the wretched ſyſtem with which they began, and ſet improvement and reformation at defiance. Averſe alike to the reſtraints of civilization and labour, and attached to no community but their own, without either books or eſtabliſhed ceremonies, they contrive to perpetuate a language as peculiar as their manners and appearance.

The figure that now preſented himſelf with ſupplicating ſtrains before us, at the end of a little woody lane (in which ſeveral of his companions, ſtretched at their eaſe upon the graſs, and under the arching boughs, were boiling their ſooty kettle over a little fire), was a robuſt and ruddy youth, apparently about one or two and twenty, with nothing of evident diſtreſs about him, except the ragged apparel, which, according to the *cuſtom* of theſe people, ſcarcely concealed his nakedneſs. The plaintive cant of his voice, however, was acted with ſuch addreſs that, in ſpite

of

of his ſleek appearance, the heart of Ambulator was affected, and he was going, almoſt mechanically, to give him money. But the flaming ruby of his cheek, fluſhed perhaps a little by inebriation, checked the riſing ardour, and gave time for my admonition.

"Is this an object of charity?" ſaid I drawing him away. "Look at thoſe limbs, and that healthful countenance: and then tell me whether you conſider it to be the part of a profeſſor of real benevolence, to encourage his vagrant indolence? Miſery, indeed, ought to be relieved, even when the effect of vice; and he himſelf is vicious who can be deaf to its appeal: but if *Labour*, as muſt be admitted, conſtitutes the real wealth of the community, it can never be the part of a good member of ſociety to contribute to the *uſeleſs* and the *idle*: unleſs, indeed, where it is commanded by the *coercive laws of his country*, and ſanctioned by *hereditary inſtitutions*."

"True!"

An attack upon Kings & Hereditary succession - which he calls useless & idle

"True!" ſaid Ambulator, "yet it is painful to refuſe ſo many ſolicitations as aſſail us!"—"I grant it; but would you therefore be tempted to beſtow where Reaſon would conſider it more virtuous to refuſe? I would relieve the miſerable indigent who was ſhivering naked among the ſeverities of winter, even though I were conſcious that his miſery was the effect of his indolent profligacy; but when the ſeaſon invites to labour, and the means of induſtry are at hand, let the young and healthy ſolicit our aſſiſtance in vain, till they find they muſt either work or ſtarve."

"Theſe gipſies, however," replied Ambulator, "will neither ſubmit to one nor the other: though *they cannot dig, to beg they are* not *aſhamed*; and when begging will not do, they will appeal to what I am inclined to think, in common with the Kings and potentates of the earth, they conſider as the more honourable expedient: that is to ſay, they will plunder. And yet, I know not how it is, but I cannot deteſt

theſe

theſe poor vagrants with all that Chriſtian fervor with which, conſidering them as *infidels* and *ſans culottes*, I may be, perhaps, in duty bound."

"Were you a hunter of the picturesque," ſaid I, "this might perhaps be readily accounted for: as they certainly, every now and then, contribute, in no ſmall degree, to the embelliſhment of rural ſcenery. When among the ruins of ſome antique caſtle, or the ivyed fragments of ſome proſtrate abbey, or (what they are more attached to) the ſhelter of ſome wood or thicket by the road ſide, you ſee them flocking around their crackling fire, or diſperſed in little cheerful groups, baſking in the ſun, or indulging their eternal propenſity for converſation, tell me, do you not feel that if theſe idle wanderers were exterminated, the landſcape painter would be robbed of one of his moſt agreeable ſources of embelliſhment, and the poet of an object well calculated to give variety to his deſcriptions? For my own part, I will rea-

readily confeſs that I have been frequently entertained by contemplating theſe ragged groups; and not among the leaſt pleaſing of the various pictures treaſured by my imagination during a late temporary reſidence on the coaſt of Kent, is to be accounted the wild aſſemblage of fancy-ſtirring ſcenery that rivetted my attention in paſſing a little thicket (called the Oaks) that ſeparates the fertile country from the ſtony beach between Dymchurch Wall and the pictureſque town of Hythe; and of which the moſt intereſting objects conſiſted of the rude encampment of a ſmall detachment of *Gipſey Cavalry*:—if ſo I may call a party of ſix or eight (men, women, and children) who are borne about in their expeditions of *diſcovery* (*i. e.* according to political interpretation, of *pillage and devaſtation*) in the panniers of a brace of jack-aſſes!"

AN EQUESTRIAN DIGRESSION.

IT was in the ſeaſon in which the leaf begins to fall into the ſeer, and the ſpringing game and impatient pack invite the jolly ſportſman to the exerciſes and recreations of the field, when, though I am by no means a friend to thoſe amuſements that ariſe from the worrying and torment of unoffending animals, yet, as I conſidered that my preſence or my abſence could make no difference in the ſufferings of the unhappy victims, I had conſented to indulge my curioſity by becoming a *party*—or rather, a *ſpectator* of the chace; more with a view that I might hereafter better enjoy the glowing deſcriptions of Somerville's didatic Muſe, than that I might boaſt my initiation into the cruel myſteries

of Diana, or have the honour to rank in the number of my amuſements the favourite and important occupation of that purblind child of *Fame* and *Fortune*, the illuſtrious *Mammon Nimrod*. Behold then—if I may be permitted an Iriciſm—behold the *Peripatetic on horſeback!* the philoſophical, poetical, ſentimental Sylvanus Theophraſtus ſurrounded by dogs, and horns, and huntſmen, mounting with jocund ſhout, the impatient neighing ſteed, and preparing for the noiſy tumults of the field. Smollet's Trunion, however, was ſcarcely further out of his element: for though my emulation—or, to give the honour where it is due, the *emulation of my horſe* would not permit me to lag during the purſuit, and though I was by no means inſenſible to the full chorus of the deep-mouthed pack, yet I muſt confeſs myſelf ſo wretched a ſportſman that the cry of the poor animal at the death, the unrelenting laſh, reſounding from the ribs of the dogs, to prevent them from devouring the prey they had toiled for, the ſhouts of the huntſ-

huntſmen, and all that conſpired ſo much to exhilarate the ſpirits of my companions, had far leſs charms to me than the fine variety of ſcenery which the eye encounters in every direction on this romantic coaſt; but which to the reſt of the party appeared to have no more attractions than the rich warblings of Harmonia's voice, that "take the priſon'd ſoul and lap it in Elyſium!" to the deaf, or her charming form, fluſhed with "the purple light of love," to the inſenſate blind.

Enchanting maid! whoſe voice and air
Alike the attentive ſoul enſnare,
And, with commutual charm, ſupply
The perfect types of harmony!
In whom enamour'd Fate beſtows
What eaſtern poets fabled long,
The nightingale and bluſhing roſe
(Love's fragrant bloom, and magic ſong!)
In bonds of ſweet affection join'd;
While beaming from the radiant eye
Speaks forth the feeling, poliſh'd mind
That wakes the finer extacy,
And ſhews, with Wiſdom's laurel wove,
Each bloom of Taſte, Refinement, Love!

But to leap again from the back of Pegaſus to my terreſtrial courſer—Now ſweeping along the beach, almoſt upon the very margin of the ocean, with the waves roaring to the right, and the lofty mountains, or rather perpendicular rocks (their ancient boundary), frowning with browner verdure upon our left, we beheld the town of Hythe ſwelling before us, on a charming woody eminence, whoſe variegated foliage interſperſes, and partially embowers it; now, toiling up the ſteep, we were ſaluted with the ivyed fragments of ancient caſtles—ſcenes of rude ſplendor, once, and Gothic pride! now nodding to their diſſolution, or converted into ſtore houſes and humble habitations for the offspring and treaſures of laborious Agriculture; or were invited to the contemplation of ſtill more glorious objects—the wide ſurface of the refulgent ocean, glittering in the morning beam, the ſwelling ſails of numerous ſcattered veſſels, and, juſt bordering on the diſtant horizon, the vine-clad hills and rocky ſhores of France

France—the laſt of which appeared not the leſs delightful in my eyes when I reflected that on their ſummits Liberty ("thrice glorious goddeſs!") haderected her ſtandard, and hailed the triumph of Philoſophy over Deſpotiſm, Ignorance, and Prieſtcraft. Now ſweeping again through lanes and valleys, we came to the ſmall remains of the once-flouriſhing town of Weſt-Hythe, (formerly a conſiderable port, though now the ſea has retired from it above a mile) where I was not a little pleaſed that the hounds, being at *fault*, gave me an opportunity of examining the beautiful ruins of the church, whoſe ſhattered walls I found moſt exquiſitely decorated with a luxuriance of ivy, of wall flowers, and a variety of nameleſs weeds with which the ruſtic hand of Flora had ſo careleſsly, but ſo liberally compenſated for all the gilt gingerbread of ſaints and croſſes, which time has ſo irreverently ſwept away. I know not whether it be that my reverence for certain ancient political inſtitutions, compels me, by ſome obſcure

aſſociation of ideas, to regard with ſuperſtitious reverence, every fragment that bears the *name of Gothic*, or whether there are ſome ſorts of buildings, like ſome ſorts of fruit, that are always moſt delightful in decay; but I confeſs I beheld the fragment of this rude and diminutive ſtructure with more ſatisfaction than all the churches and chapels that modern Architecture ever put her finiſhing hand to, could poſſibly impart. Nor did the young aſh, flouriſhing in the middle, and forming, with its green ſpreading branches, a ſort of ſecond roof (for the former one had long ſince fallen in, and the fragments of it, overgrown with graſs and weeds, encreaſed, in no ſmall degree, the pictureſque irregularities of the ground) diminiſh the attractions of the ſcene, any more than the thatched hovel, in one of the corners, which ſerved as a ſtable for a little rough-coated animal (the uſeful ſervant of an adjacent cottager) whoſe braying was now the only muſic that ſhook thoſe walls in which ſo fre-

frequently the anthem of Superſtition has been pealed from a hundred voices.

The reader will no doubt ſmile at the idea of a ſportſman withdrawing himſelf from his dogs and companions, to wander among the crumbling fragments of an ancient building, and moralize on the inſtability of ſublunary things: and as for one claſs of mankind, I doubt not but I ſhall fall into the bottomleſs pit of their contempt, for a poor, ſneaking, ſtupid, ſnivelling blockhead, who knows not what pleaſure and enjoyment are. As theſe gentlemen, however (more famous for their vociferation than their eloquence) may be ſomewhat at a loſs for words to expreſs their contempt for ſuch an inſipid character, and paint the ſuperior enjoyments reſerved for lads of their tranſcendent parts, and nobler ſpirit, I beg leave to preſent them with the following little juvenile production: which I flatter myſelf will as exactly ſuit the neceſſity of their caſe, as

if they had been able to compoſe it themſelves.

PHILAUTIACCHA;

OR THE

VOLUPTUARY:

A RHAPSODY.

How loſt to every ſenſe of joy
The wretch who courts the lonely ſigh!
Who flies from Pleaſure's cheerful dome
To rocks and ſhades of penſive gloom,
And muſing through the mould'ring pile—
The caſtle's wreck, or Gothic iſle—
Converſes, with myſterious dread,
With troops of "viſionary dead,"
And counts, in his bewilder'd mind,
The various woes of humankind!
Who, dreaming fool! condemn'd to bear
A portion of each wretch's care,
Will pine for every ſtranger's woe,
And weep when others' ſorrows flow;
If anguiſh rend a neighbour's ſoul,
Will daſh with gall his ſprightly bowl,
And ſniv'ling to his cloſet fly
If Envy nip a brother's joy!
Oh! may I never, never be,
Thou ſqueamiſh dame! accurſt with thee,
Tormenting SENSIBILITY!
But ever ſhall my vows be paid
To thee, thou bleſt indifferent maid!

Who

Who view'ſt alike, with careleſs eyes,
Another's ſorrows, or his joys;
Intent to ſeize, with eager hand,
Whatever bliſs thy ſtars command:——
Bliſs which, to be admitted true,
The touch muſt feel, the ſenſe muſt view;
And which, like vital breath, 'tis known
To be enjoy'd muſt be our own.

Thee, damſel, wanton, ſleek, and gay!
Blithe Bacchus got one feſtive day,
When, reeling, he the vineyard ſought,
And 'neath the mantling tendrils thought,
Defended from the ſultry ray,
To doze the tippling fumes away.
There it was his chance to ſee
The ſordid dame MISANTHROPY:
A louring, ſelfiſh, ſullen wight,
Who ſcowling flies from human ſight,
Nor ever heav'd the *ſocial ſigh*,
Nor knew *participated joy*.
Her he ſeiz'd, in dalliance rude,
And to his will by force ſubdued;
And hence from her unwilling womb
Didſt thou, blithe motley damſel, come——
Who know'ſt around thy brow to twine
With cluſters of thy father's *vine*
The *myrtle* ſpray of Paphos grove
And *roſy wreath* he wont to love,
Till all thy mother's ſullen hue,
And ſordid front retire from view,
And thronging votaries hail thy fame,
Adorn'd with PLEASURE's hallow'd name:
But they, the pow'rs who rule on high,
And, ſtooping from their ambient ſky,

Read at will the ſecret heart,
And view thy mother's ſager part.
Combining in thy motley frame
With all thy father's wanton flame,——
As ſportive, ſenſual, looſe as HE,
And ſelfiſh, to the full, as SHE!——
To paint in one deſcriptive name
Each adverſe parent's partial claim,
In ſage debate awhile confer,
And call thee PHILAUTIACCHA!

Come, ſportive, wanton, briſk, along,
With flowing bowl and antic ſong,
And banquets gay, and feaſting high,
And laughter loud, and thoughtleſs joy.
Come, revel high without controul!—
Why ſhould reflection damp the ſoul?—
While, unreſtrained, I riot free
In all the pomp of luxury,
What is't to me that at the door
A thouſand wretches, ſtarv'd and poor,
With diſmal moan, and plaintive cry,
And ſhivering limbs, all naked lie?
Wherefore ſhould I unhappy be
That others are in miſery?
Do Monarchs, or their tools of ſtate,
Their wild ambition e'er abate,
Or quit one barren tract of land,
Whoſe ſubjugation Pride had plann'd,
Becauſe the ruthleſs edge of war,
To ſpread their mighty names afar,
Muſt mow in heaps the baſe-born crowd,
And leave the peaſant's low abode,

While

While Deſolation ſtalks aroun',
A proſtrate ruin on the ground—
While widows, orphans, houſeleſs rove
With piteous plaint the heart to move,
The palſied hand of Want to ſpread
To paſſing crowds, in vain, for bread?
Will they the haughty ſcheme forego
For fear the general groan of woe
Reſounding thro' the ſubject land
Should learn to curſe the ſcepter'd hand?
No: keep but ſheath'd the rebel ſword,
The wanton night, the waſteful board,
Unawed by Conſcience, they enjoy,
And give new mandates to deſtroy;
And ſhall not, patron of my ſong!
Their great example ſway the throng
Who to thy hallow'd fane reſort
With feſtive Joy and reeling Sport?

Here, higher fill the ſprightly bowl,
Shall I the plenteous draught controul,
Or ſtint the meaſure of my bliſs,
(Ye feeling ſniv'lers, tell me this!)
That others may the bliſs enjoy
My more propitious ſtars ſupply?
No: *may I never never be,*
Thou ſqueamiſh dame! accurſed with thee,
Tormenting Senſibility!

When now the noiſy banquet tires,
Let Beauty kindle fierce deſires.
Then, while tumultuous joy alarms,
I'll languiſh in ſome fair one's arms.

—Oh! give me, with aſſiduous art,
To triumph o'er the female heart!
Lo, Chloe's eye provokes my flame;
My heart does Fanny's beauty claim;
The roſe that tinges Sylvia's cheek,
Fair Flavia's ivory poliſh'd neck,
Bright Celia's graceful panting breaſt,
With charming ſhape gay Phebe bleſt,
All, all alike, my boſom fire,
All, all enkindle fierce deſire;
And all—might I my wiſh obtain!—
Shall eaſe my heart's delightful pain.
Or if by my deſires I'm led
Some lovely loathing fair to wed,
With golden views I'll win her ſire
To yield her up to my deſire;
I'll riot in the unwilling joy,
And force the bliſs ſhe would deny;
While ſome fond favour'd youth ſhall tear
With frenzy his diſhevelled hair;
Or, in the deſperate rage of woe,
Diſmiſs his ſoul to ſhades below.
What is't to me if ſhe ſhould pine,
Her ſilly heart to grief reſign,
Waſte the long day in ſullen ſighs,
And meet my wiſh with ſtreaming eyes?
The mellow touch of feeble woe
A ſofter languor may beſtow;
And I alike by turns can hail
The flaunting roſe, or lily pale!
Then let her pine—with grief expire—
So I obtain my heart's deſire.
I am no dull, no conſtant fool:
She'll live at leaſt till I grow cool.

When glutted grows the amorous fire
(For beauty's brighteſt charms will tire)
I'll leave my couch at early dawn,
And follow blithe the echoing horn.
See, ſee the ſteeds impatient ſtand,
And paw, with reſtleſs hoof, the land:
They ſnort, curvet, and loudly neigh,
Impatient of the dull delay.
We mount. Uncoupled are the hounds,
See, they trace the buſhy grounds.
They ſnuff the gale. They ſtart the hare:
And mingled clamours rend the air.
The deep-mouth'd hounds, with eager cry,
Purſue the ſcent, and yelping fly.
We ſhouting follow in the rear,
Devoid of ev'ry coward fear;
The hedge we jump, the gate we leap,
And over ditch and ſtreamlet ſkip.——
Behold, behold, our comrade falls,
And loud for our aſſiſtance calls;
Aloud with anguiſh he complains
Of broken limbs, and raging pains.
Yo hoy, my boys! the game purſue;
Behold, behold the hare in view!
Shall we the glorious ſport forego
To weep at our companion's woe?
Tantwivy, boys! purſue, purſue,
Behold, the game is full in view,
See, ſhe takes the foaming tide;
Purſu'd, ſhe gains the diſtant ſide.
Our ſteeds refuſe the curbing rein,
And in the torrent plunge amain.

Now cloſely cling, the ſaddle keep,
Or elſe ye ſound the troubled deep.
And ſee, the bold adventrous fair
Who would our manly paſtimes ſhare;—
She falls! ſhe falls! aloud ſhe cries,
The ſplaſhing waves around her riſe.
Tantwivy, boys! the hare's in view,
The well-breath'd beagles cloſe purſue.
Ya hoa! my lads! away, away.—
The eager ſport forbids delay.——

Now o'er the fields of ripen'd corn
In ſwift purſuit we're eager borne,
The bended ears, where'er we fly,
Trampled on earth, our ſteeds deſtroy:
With curſes loud the farmer views,
And fretting, with his eye purſues.
Why let him fret, and chafe, and fume,
'Tis nought to me, as I preſume.

Ya hoigh! my comrades! how he ſtands
And rears to heav'n his claſping hands!——
"Why halloo, farmer! do you pray
In open air at middle day?"
He feels—he feels the biting jeſt,
And beats with frantic rage his breaſt.
'Tis true, what thus our hoofs deſtroy
Might ſome poor famiſh'd wretch ſupply;
Might give a meal to thoſe who *till'd*
But ſeldom *taſte* the plenteous field.
But why ſhould thoughts like theſe aſſail?
Purſue—purſue the tainted gale!

We

We do but chace our lawful game:
And ROYAL GEORGE would do the ſame:
That BEST OF KINGS! whoſe gracious care
The World's four diſtant corners ſhare;
While all an equal cauſe muſt own
To bleſs him for the good he'as done! ! !

See, ſee, the hounds have ſeiz'd the hare,
And fierce her mangled haunches tear.
Now, huntſmen, do not ſpare the whip:
Beat, beat them off! The ready lip
Then to the mellow horn apply,
And ſwell the loud triumphant joy,
Till woods, and echoing hills reply.

I well remember on a day
To have heard a ſqueamiſh ſniv'ler ſay,
"How cruel 'tis, for ſport that we
Should give theſe creatures miſery!
Poor puſs! poor harmleſs puſs!" he ſaid,
And hung in dole his oafiſh head.
"What joy can any thinking mind
From all thy fears and tortures find?"
Oh! would to Jove the ſniv'lling dunce
Were to a hare transform'd at once,
That we might chace him now to death!
Why have ſuch milkſops vital breath?

Oh! may I never, never be,
Thou ſqueamiſh dame! accurſt with thee,
Tormenting SENSIBILITY!

Thus done the chace, new viſions riſe,
Bath'd in the bowl's capacious joys,

Of choral mirth, and reeling ſong,
And jokes that Laughter's reign prolong,
Till Slumber, wrapt in antic fumes,
At length her wonted reign aſſumes.

Thus let me walk gay Pleaſure's rounds,
With wine, with women, horſes, hounds,
And whate'er elſe can tranſport give;
For only while we're gay we live.
Let tender Pity ſway the woman's mind
While I the ſweets of ſenſual Rapture find!

But the eccentricity of my taſte,—or my taſteleſs eccentricity (call it which you will) was yet not ſufficiently indulged; and neither the force of this incontrovertible reaſoning (which I knew might be urged againſt me), nor the dread of this well-founded ridicule (which I was aware would in part be indulged by my boon-companions) could determine me to reſiſt the temptation, which ſhortly preſented itſelf before me. My character, indeed, (like that of the fair Sémele of old, of purring and whiſkered memory) was apparently

rently metamorphoſed, but the impreſſions of ancient habit ſtill remained; and no ſooner was the favourite object perceived within my reach, than I bolted eagerly forth on my accuſtomed quarry, and ſunk back again into the identical ſort of being for which the Fates had ſo apparently deſigned me. To ſpeak a little intelligibly, (by which an author is not always rendered the leſs agreeable to ſome ſorts of readers) while the keener ſportſmen of our party, unſatisfied with the ſcanty laurels of a ſingle victory, were nobly purſuing a ſecond hapleſs fugitive, I was ſo ſtruck with the romantic proſpect of the once-noble caſtle of Saltwood, that unable to reſiſt the ſtrong deſire of meditating among its ruins, I compelled my horſe, though not without conſiderable difficulty, to abandon the track of the hounds, and bear me to that ruined fortreſs.

It was formerly a place of very conſiderable ſtrength, not only from the extent and ſolidity of its walls, and the natural advan-

advantages of its ſite, but alſo from the mounds and deep foſſes that ſurround it. Theſe are now overgrown with the moſt luxuriant vegetation, and ſo interſperſed with trees, briars, and underwoods, as to enrich and diverſify, in a conſiderable degree, the charming extent of romantic ſcenery which it every way commands. But the moſt delightful object that here preſents itſelf is certainly formed by the majeſtic ruins of the caſtle itſelf, towering, in ſome places, to its original height, and in others laid proſtrate almoſt to its foundation, and, every where, mantled with a wild luxuriance of ivy: that mourning robe of fallen Architecture—that monumental veil of departed Grandeur—which more ſtrongly than all the deaths heads and halting epigrams of the church-yard, reminds us of the inſtability of worldly things, and the certain pace with which all pride and human vanity haſten to their native duſt. Nor muſt the ſtately Gothic arches be forgotten, crowned ſometimes with ſapling oaks or beech, lifting their green

green heads from among the disjointed ſtones. Theſe arches were originally the principal entrances to the outworks of this noble fortification; and though the maſſive doors (that uſed in days of yore to open with ſullen majeſty upon the groaning hinge, to admit the glittering train of creſted knights, armed for the tilt or tournament) have yielded to the ruſtic ſwinging gate, ſuch as every field and farm-yard commonly preſents; and though the proceſſions of ladies fair and barons bold have given way to thoſe of lowing oxen returning from the yoke or the paſture, they have not yet loſt all their beauty in the eye of the antiquary, or the lover of meditation.

It was at one of theſe gates that I alighted and tied my horſe, that I might proceed on foot at my leiſure, to examine the ruins, and enjoy the beautiful ſcenery around them. The remains of the chapel are now converted into a ſtable (as in the time of Cromwell was the whole of that

ſub-

ſublime ſpecimen of Gothic taſte and ſplendor, the Cathedral of Chriſt Church, Canterbury;) other parts are converted into barns and ſtore houſes; flowers and pot-herbs are planted in ſome of the roofleſs halls and chambers; and ſome parts of theſe once formidable fortifications, that were wont to frown defiance on the foe, have been preſerved to aſſume the ſmiling appearance of fruit walls. But the only portion of this building which can be conſidered as at all entire, is that which was, I ſuppoſe, originally the principal front and entrance of the interior keep; with a beautiful round tower to the right and left; of which I indulged myſelf with taking a drawing. This is preſerved in very good repair; being the reſidence of the farmer who rents the premiſes; and has ſtill a very fine effect.

We are informed by Dr. Gale, that this caſtle was originally built by the Romans; and ſeveral antiquities found at different times, in the neighbourhood, tend conſiderably

ably to ſupport the opinion. Many parts, however, of the remaining edifice, particularly the Gothic arches formerly mentioned, bear the evident marks of more recent additions: and of theſe, indeed, the records are in exiſtence. In the year 1036 Halden, a noble Saxon, beſtowed it upon the Archbiſhop of Canterbury, to whoſe ſucceſſors it long deſcended. It was enlarged and beautified by Archbiſhop Courtney; and given by Cranmer to Henry VIII. in exchange for other lands. It was afterwards conferred, by Edward VI. upon John Dudley, Earl of Warwick; but ſoon reverting again to the crown, it was granted by that king, in 1550, to Edward Lord Clinton; from whom it came through ſeveral hands into the poſſeſſion of Sir Brooke Bridges, Bart. But the reign of its arbitrary ſplendor is now effectually terminated. It has come at laſt into the more uſeful, and conſequently more truly noble tenantry of a Kentiſh Yeoman; whoſe implements of huſbandry adorn, with better grace, the hall once hung

hung with Roman, or with Gothic trophies: the emblems not ſo truly of *human Glory*, as of *the frenzy and brutal depravity of mankind*.

It was returning from this noble pile of ruins, and admiring, as I deſcended, the fine impurpled tint diffuſed by the ſun, then verging towards its decline, over "the world of waters waſte and wide," that I was ſtruck with the ſcene before alluded to, and from which I have wandered into this long digreſſion. The little patch of half-grown oaks, rather checkering than excluding the yellow miſty light that gleamed over the ſouthern horizon, had of itſelf ſufficient charms to rivet my attention as I approached. But when paſſing through the glade, I ſaw, at a ſmall diſtance, the cheerful family of vagrants ſitting on the graſs, around their crackling fire, and enjoying their repaſt, and to me unintelligible converſation; with their rude, lowly tents in the rear, conſiſting of a kind of blanket ſtretched, in ſemicircu-

lar

lar form, acroſs ſome hoops, ſtuck at unequal diſtances in the ground; and the patient "mute companions of their toils" grazing with ſocial familiarity by their ſides, I could not reſiſt the impulſe that urged me to check my horſe awhile, and contemplate the curious group.

It is true, indeed, there was in this ſcene none of that glaring ſplendor—none of that marvellous novelty neceſſary to fix the demure, half-vacant eye of reverend *Gravity:* and the *Lettered Sages of Paternoſter-Row* may perhaps be no leſs inclined than the ſyſtematic ſons of *Worldly Sagacity*, to wonder what amuſement I could find in the contemplation of ſuch vulgar objects. But if their *Wiſdom* contracts the circle of their enjoyments, let them keep it to themſelves in God's name; and he who gave it them give them the joy of it alſo. For me, I will ſtill remain contented with this idle eccentricity;—this vagrant frenzy!—moody melancholy!—half ſenſe, half madneſs! call it what you will,

will, with which the *Muſe*, or the *Moon* inſpires me;—which from the moſt frivolous adventures, and the moſt ordinary objects has ſo often extracted the ſweets of amuſing meditation;—from the fading fragrance of the rifled roſe has drawn forth the inſtructive tale of woe; has ſoared into ecſtacies from the vernal ſtrain of the feathered ſongſter; and dived into hiſtorical diſquiſition from the proſpect of a little ragged group of houſeleſs vagrants. In ſhort, from the contemplation of this ſcene, ſimple as it was, a thouſand romantic viſions came ruſhing upon my imagination; from which, by a concatenation of ideas, not neceſſary to be here purſued, I was induced to indulge my meditations, or my fancy rather, on the firſt rude advances towards ſociety, and the barbarous and inſignificant beginnings to which, were we but in poſſeſſion of the clue, we might probably be enabled to trace the greateſt and proudeſt nations of the earth. Rome, the once haughty miſtreſs of the world! is well known to have been

been founded by a band of robbers; who once, perhaps, were as contemptible in numbers and condition as they were deſpicable in moral character. And though the preſent complexion of ſociety, in the *ancient hemiſphere*, affords but little proſpect that a little miſerable horde like this, wherever it might be met with, ſhould be the germ or ſeed of future domination; yet, perhaps there was a time when the root, or ſcion of the *Saxon colony*, that *eſtabliſhed*, or the *Norman*, that *enſlaved the Engliſh nation*, made as miſerable and obſcure a figure in the great nurſery of unknown events. And even at this hour, it is not impoſſible that, in the woods and trackleſs wilderneſſes of America, the wretched family may be aſſembled, in numbers no more reſpectable than theſe wretched vagrants, at the entrance of their caverns, or their moving huts, doomed, at ſome future period, to ſwell the purple tide of ſlaughter and renown, and give (ſhould *political degeneracy* ever create the occaſion)

its Attilas and its Theodorics to the WESTERN WORLD!

But to return to my companions, to whom I muſt be admitted not to have behaved with the moſt ceremonious politeneſs; and who will perhaps be expected (while I have been rambling, on my winged courſer, through this long digreſſion, over hill, dale, and woodland—fields of hiſtory and bowers of fancy, cliffs of Kent and rocky ſummits of Parnaſſus) to have marched forward with ſome degree of anger and reſentment, and by this time very comfortably put on their nightcaps at the inn in Rocheſter.—But not ſo faſt, cenſorious reader! for to the great diſparagement of thy ſagacity, and much to my ſatisfaction, I am going to rejoin them and renew our converſation, juſt at the very place, and preciſely in the ſame friendly humour, that I left them.

THE ROMANTIC EXCURSION.

"I Grant," ſaid Ambulator, (taking up my conceit in rather a more ſerious point of view than I intended) "that we ſeldom exerciſe our moral ſeverity in a very inflexible manner againſt thoſe objects that have amuſed our fancy; and I muſt confeſs myſelf ſo far to ſympathize with your eccentricities, as to be ſenſible of the pleaſing impreſſions ſometimes made upon the imagination by theſe vagrant groups: eſpecially in the nocturnal ſcene, when the picture they preſent to us around their blazing fires requires but little aſſiſtance from fancy to conjure up all the ideas of furies, hags, and phantoms which throng the Gothic legends that delighted our anceſtors; and by which ſome of us mo-

derns, alſo, can ſometimes condeſcend, without a bluſh, to be tranſported beyond the ſober boundaries of reaſon and reality. With a deſcription of this kind, I can, I believe, preſent you, from an epiſtle written ſome years ago from the north, to a volatile young friend of mine in London, by a youthful poet, who, conformably enough to the general diſpoſition of his tribe, had determined, at the expence of all that prudence and intereſt could ſuggeſt, to ſeek felicity in the arms of rural innocence and affection.

" He had been detained for a conſiderable time by a circumſtance otherwiſe ſufficiently diſtreſſing to his feelings; and finding, when at laſt he was at liberty to proceed, that it was the only night in the week when the ſtage he was to travel in did not perform, he even determined (for in ſuch a caſe, you know, delay was impoſſible) to proceed (though not upon a very philoſophical errand) according to the

the faſhion of the ancient ſages, and of us, their philoſophical ſucceſſors.

"The poem, it is true, is ſomewhat long, and a ſmall part of it, only, relates to the ſubject in converſation; but I ſhall venture to recite the whole, as it breathes the ardour of a tender paſſion, which we are none of us old enough to deſpiſe."

Belmour lifted his eyes to heaven and ſighed.

EPISTLE TO MERCUTIO.

While you, my friend, in London's giddy town,
With jeſt and ſong each grave reflection drown,
Flirt with gay belles, beſiege fantaſtic wenches
Who fire Love's glances from their paſte-board trenches,
Whence, while their banners wave, they dauntleſs wield
The various arms of Love's triumphant field—
The high plum'd helm that each fierce boſom awes,
And all the ſacred panoply of gauze—
While ſilken bands are heap'd convenient round,
To bind the captives that they help to wound:
While cares like theſe your youthful heart detain
Far from the peaceful ſhade and ruſtic plain;
Me here remov'd from ſcenes of buſtling noiſe,
The town's lewd follies, and its fickly joys,

The *Muſe* perchance, perchance ſome ſtronger power,
Attracts to loiter in the rural bower,
Where Nature's ſong, and Plenty's joyous ſmile
Soothe the charm'd fancy, and the ſoul beguile:
While ſhadowy groves indulge the tranquil hour,
And woo, ſerene, the philoſophic power!

You ſmile, my ſportive friend! and well you may,
That now Philoſophy ſhould tune the lay.
No: truth to tell, on Catmoſe' cheerful plains
No penſive gloom, no pedant dulneſs reigns;
No ſolemn ſaws of philoſophic pride,
That bid the feelings of the heart ſubſide!
'Tis tranſport all: the height of feſtive joy:
And jocund hours on wings of rapture fly.
Here (lö Hymen!) Love triumphant dwells
With jeſt and glee, and ſound of merry bells:
Mirth rules ſupreme o'er every friendly breaſt,
And yields reluctant e'en the dues of reſt.
And yet, to hail fair Friendſhip's hallow'd power,
From joys like theſe I ſteal a ſilent hour,
To thee, my lov'd Mercutio! to impart
The *new* ſenſations of a ſocial heart:
For what new joys can veering Fate reveal
But you, in part, from ſympathy may feel?
Dear *friend* and *pupil!*—oft as either tried:
As that my *joy*—as this my *honeſt pride*.
—But let us here to preface bid adieu,
While I my journey's ſimple tale purſue.

Releas'd at length from Duty's iron chain,
Whoſe painful links the happier wiſh reſtrain,
Full light of heart ſets forth the man of rhime,
For cheerful Catmoſe, Joy's triumphant clime.

Dear

Dear *land of Promiſe!* for whoſe bliſsful groves
(Haunts of the Virtues! Muſes! Graces! Loves!)
Long had I languiſh'd, thro' my drooping frame
While fond Impatience darts the youthful flame!
And now, no more by angry Fate delay'd,
Eager I fly to claſp the blooming maid.
Tho' Stamford's coach the Jewiſh ſabbath kept,
And man and beaſt in pious malice ſlept,
My ardent ſoul diſdain'd the feeble bar:——
Winds thwart in vain when Love's the pilot ſtar!
Up Highgate hill, o'er Barnet's fatal heath,
Where factious Warwick breath'd his lateſt breath:
And hence to Hatfield, once of high renown
For royal domes and heaths of barren brown,
Thro' rain unwet, thro' dangerous roads ſerene,
With limbs unwearied, and with cheerful mien,
On foot I thrid the ſullen ſhades of night,
In hopes on ſome conveyance to alight
Propitious to my pray'r. Nor think, the while,
One general blank gloom'd cheerleſs o'er my toil:
For ſtill the mournful turtle from the glade
Trills the ſad note that echoes thro' the ſhade,
While *glow-worms* oft their amorous fires diſplay,
To light the wandering lover on his way:
Like Hero's torch that thro' the midnight hour
Blaz'd long-expecting from the ſea-beat tower,
When bold Leander the impetuous tide
Stemm'd with fond arm,—but in the conflict died.
Ah, gentle worm! may no ſuch fate aſſail
Thy vagrant bridegroom, to the ruthleſs gale
Who now, perhaps, his little wing diſplays,
With eye faſt anchor'd on thy ſilver rays.
Swift to thy virgin boſom may the breeze
Bear him ſecure, and all thy terrors eaſe.

When now, at length, each cheerful hope was flown,
And round full oft the anxious eye was thrown,
Intent to ſeek (by angry Spleen oppreſt)
Some neighbouring Inn, for hoſpitable reſt—
(Tho' theſe approach'd,—impatient of delay—
I ſtill purſued my ſolitary way.)
Advancing ſounds my drooping fancy cheer,
And the loud laſh rings muſic in my ear.
And lo! a coach, with ſteeds of fiery breed,
Thro' Stamford bound towards the banks of Tweed.
No room within, I cheerful mount the roof,
Againſt the rain by *love*, not *cloathing*, proof:
For, like a modern friend, ſo Fate decreed!
My good ſurtout lurk'd in the hour of need
Secure at home, together folded warm,
And left me fenceleſs to the pelting ſtorm.
But ſhort the ſtorm: and now with jocund lay
And vacant laughter we deceive the way,
While our ſtout *guard*, well ſoak'd with gin and ale,
Roar'd at my "Paddy Bull," and "Sheering Tale;"
Then ſmoak'd his pipe, laid down his threat'ning gun,
And, while the ſteeds o'er darkling wild-heaths run,
Flat on his belly, o'er the coaches eaves,
Snor'd out amain——to fright away the thieves.

But ſee!—What comet, with diſaſtrous glare,
Thwarts the thick gloom, and frights the midnight air?
What flame infernal, by demoniac breath
Fann'd, on the confines of the lurid heath——
While hagged phantoms, with diſcordant yell,
Throng round, malign, to brew the fatal ſpell?
Such, to the fancy vers'd in tales of old,
Might ſeem the ſpectres whom we now behold:

But,

But, truth to ſay, nor comet's hideous glare,
Nor flame infernal frights the midnight air;
Nor hags, nor dæmons, with diſcordant yell,
Dance round the cauldron o'er the direful ſpell;
But vagrant Gipſies, on the foreſt's bound,
Squat round their fire loquacious on the ground;
And, while reflected flames their features die
With tints dread glaring on the timid eye,
Their drunken ſcream and ſhouts of noiſy joy
Salute our coach at diſtance paſſing by.

Poor harmleſs vagrants!—harmleſs when compar'd
With thoſe whom titles deck, and kings reward—
The price of fell ambition, and the meed
Of each oppreſſive, every ruthleſs deed:
Of cities ſack'd, of empires overthrown,
And ſtruggling millions doom'd in chains to groan.
Poor harmleſs vagrants! whom the reeking kniſe
Red with the midnight wanderer's raviſh'd life
Yet ne'er reproach'd, nor crimes of ſavage die
Which the ſweet ſlumbers of the night deſtroy:
Whoſe utmoſt want ne'er own'd the ſtern appeal
To threaten'd fury, or the brandiſh'd ſteel:
Still rove ſecure; and may no beadle's thong
Remorſeleſs drive your wandering groups along!
No tyrant juſtice your retreats aſſail,
And doom ye, cheerleſs, to the yawning gaol!
But may ye ſtill thro' wood and heath enjoy
The darling boon of ſavage Liberty—
Whoſe rudeſt ſmile, whoſe moſt barbarian look
The ſoul of generous fire can better brook
(Tho' oft her board the niggard meal ſupply)
Than all the pomps of pamper'd Slavery.

Oft, harmleſs vagrants! as I lonely ſtray,
May your rude groups adorn the woody way;
And round your kettles, pendant o'er the fire,
The ruddy ſmoak and cheerful flames aſpire,
While loitering near, beneath the hawthorn ſhade,
The tawny lover woos the willing maid.

Light wakes the Morn, in veil of fleecy clouds,
Whoſe meek diſguiſe her glowing beauties ſhrouds:
Like my fond fair, whoſe ardent love I find
Veil'd in pure modeſty of form and mind:
The lark in air, the linnet on the ſpray,
All ſeem to hail me, gratulous and gay;
The ſilver Ouze, as clear it winds along,
Murmurs reſponſive to the cheerful ſong,
While its briſk tenants, as they ſportive glide,
Leap from the ſtream and ſhew the gloſſy ſide.
Thus pleas'd with all that Nature's ſtores diſplay,
Auſpicious omens cheer me on the way;
Till now, at length, in Stamford's ancient town,
Whoſe gates and ſpires four neighbouring counties own,
I light; nor idly linger to ſurvey
Her ancient piles, or Wiland's wandering way,
But mount the ſteed, and fly before the gale
With eager hopes to Catmoſe' fertile vale.

But here the joys that wait what tongue can tell?
What tender tranſports in my boſom ſwell!
Nature's beſt boons my throbbing heart divide—
The tender mother, and the virgin bride.
Oh! thou canſt never gueſs,—canſt ne'er conceive
What rapt'rous charms in love-warm'd beauty live,
When the ſoft heart, unknown to practis'd guile,
Speaks in the tear, and ſparkles in the ſmile;—

When

When the long-ſever'd maid, whom paſſion warms,
With joy commutual ruſhes to your arms,
Drops the fond head upon your throbbing breaſt,
And yields to feelings not to be expreſs'd.

O friend! thou know'ſt not what a tie combines
Their mutual hearts whom ſocial feeling joins.
'Tis not the thrilling glow of ſenſual joys
(Which Nature's breath to loweſt brutes ſupplies,
And man as brutal, loſt to mental worth,
Deems the chief ſource of Rapture's wanton birth)
That wakes (whate'er the vulgar mind may deem)
The fondeſt tranſport of their pure eſteem.
The couch of Love—th' extatic fond embrace
(Tho' theſe from virtue ſnatch a higher grace)
Yield not the deareſt pleaſures to the pair
Whom heaven unites, who mutual wiſhes ſhare.
No: their beſt joys from nobler ſources ſpring—
Joys ſaints might taſte, and raptur'd ſeraphs ſing:
Soul join'd with ſoul, the ſympathizing mind,
Truth undefil'd—and feelings all refin'd;
One ſpirit guiding—by one will inform'd—
And two fond boſoms by one eſſence warm'd.

But theſe are raptures which no words can paint:
Language is weak, and Fancy's colouring faint.
Ev'n in the fondeſt dreams of ardent love
I gueſs'd not half the bliſs 'twas mine to prove.
Imagination's ſelf, with all the aids
Of love inſpiring, and the tuneful maids,
To paint the genuine tranſports vainly ſtrove,
Which but the huſband bleſs'd like me can prove.

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GIPSIES.

"PERHAPS," ſaid Ambulator, "in the digreſſion, for the ſake of which I have principally quoted this ſpecimen of poetical and amorous enthuſiaſm, the good natured philoſopher might be inclined to ſeek for the real cauſe why ſo little of our hatred is directed againſt theſe ragged vagrants. The leſſer crimes, prompted by neceſſity, or indolence, are, it is true, and not without foundation, laid to their charge with ſufficient frequency, to excite ſome degree of uneaſineſs among thoſe in whoſe neighbourhood they may take up their temporary reſidence: but, in other reſpects, their manners are, I believe, as innocent as they are ſingular; and the black catalogue of offences that diſturb the nocturnal ſecu-

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rity of our manſions, and the peace and ſafety of the traveller on the highway, has never, that I remember, been ſwelled by their enormities. They will rob a barn or a hen-rooſt, indeed; or ſnatch a ſhirt or apron from the gooſeberry buſhes, where they are bleeching; but theſe are depredations we may ſurely be inclined to paſs over, with ſome degree of lenity from a people expoſed to ſo many temptations to commit more ſerious offences; from which they rather appear to be reſtrained by the *ſimplicity* of their character than by any moral lectures of a regular education, or any reſpect, or reputation, in the world, which they are fearful of confiſcating by ſuch offences.

"Some years ago, indeed, ſeveral of them were hanged for threatening to ſet the town of Northampton on fire. But, in this deſperate intention, they were actuated rather by a kind of honourable *eſprit du corps*, than by any wanton or hardened malignity; their indignation being awakened by

by the ſeizure of ſeveral of their companions, whom the magiſtrates had impriſoned, and whoſe releaſe they had ſolicited in vain."

"As to the comparative innocence of theſe vagrants," ſaid I, "I am inclined to believe you are tolerably correct in your ſtatement; but as for the apprehenſion in which they keep the minds of thoſe in whoſe neighbourhood they occaſionally reſide; here, I believe, you are a little miſtaken. In London, I have heard it obſerved, that your property is never more ſecure than in houſes frequented by notorious thieves; and the gipſies appear to be actuated by ſentiments of equal caution, and to regard as ſacred from their uſual peculations, the ſcenes of their frequent rendezvous. I ſpeak not from vague information, but from the teſtimony of thoſe beſt calculated to afford it, the inhabitants, I mean, of a little obſcure village on the borders of the fens of Lincolnſhire, in which one of their tribes uſed to take up

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an occaſional reſidence, ſometimes for ſeveral weeks together, once, at leaſt, in every ſummer, till they loſt, in their hoary patriarch, the benevolent ſovereign under whoſe auſpices they had flouriſhed, and were no longer capable of making that appearance, which could command the reſpect they were uſed to from the ruſtic inhabitants.—But, perhaps, the whole of the adventure that led to my information upon this ſubject may not be unentertaining; and the recital of it may enable us without fatigue to proceed a few miles farther upon our road than we ſhould otherwiſe be inclined to do."

A SUBJECT for the PENCIL of GAINSBOROUGH:—

BUT HE IS GONE; "*and, take him all in all,*
"*We ſhall not look upon his like again!*"

MY fellow travellers ſeemed readily to accord with my ſuggeſtion: but I had ſcarcely

ſcarcely began the narrative, when Ambulator, whoſe eye is ever on the watch for opportunities to indulge his benevolence, was attracted by a group of healthy looking cottage children, whoſe decent, but homely appearance, and ruſtic politeneſs (for they bowed and curteſied to us with their beſt grace as we approached them) went immediately to his heart.

"Here, at leaſt," ſaid he, "I may rid myſelf, I hope, of a few halfpence, without your cenſure.—Are you all brothers and ſiſters," continued he, "my dears!"—"Yes," liſped a toddling curley-pated infant; holding up his little ruddy hand, and ſtruggling with the reſt for his halfpenny; which my friend beſtowed with a heart-ſpeaking ſmile of extaſy, that never —no never (ſuch, OMNIPOTENT FATHER OF THE UNIVERSE! is thy juſt decree) ſhall gild the countenance of any but the feeling and generous. "And, what is your father? my little dears!" continued he, renewing his benefactions.

"He

"He works at farmer ſuch a one's now," ſaid another, a little older; "but ſometimes he goes a hedging."—"A hedging!" exclaims Ambulator: "and ſuch a family to maintain. Good heaven!—Here, my dear," continued he, putting ſomething (but what I know not) into the hand of the eldeſt,—a pretty modeſt-looking girl, of about fourteen, who was ſtanding ſilently at the door of the cottage, and obſerving all that paſſed; "give this to your mammy, to get the good man ſome ſupper againſt he comes home from work."—"I have no mammy, Sir;" ſaid the girl, burſting into tears; "ſhe has been dead theſe ſix months. But I will get him ſome ſupper, Sir, againſt he returns; ſince it has pleaſed God to ſend the money: and I am ſure, Sir, he will be very thankful."

This ſimple tale of ruſtic ſorrows penetrated us to the heart. And the impreſſion, perhaps, was heightened in no ſmall degree,

degree, by the beauty of the little maid that uttered them.

Poor little innocent! yet, a while, thoſe unprotected beauties may befriend thee, and awaken the feeling heart of Charity to finer ſympathies. But, alas! how ſoon, like treacherous friends, may they lure thee to thy miſery and ruin: when rakes and libertines, ſecured by thy poverty from the reſentful arm of Chaſtiſement, ſhall think themſelves privileged to inſult thee with every artifice of vicious temptation. But hide thoſe roſes, hide them ere they open; waſh thee in ſhells of walnuts, ſimple maid!—conceal the native tincture of thy ſkin; and that which ſicklier beauties do for blandiſhment, do thou for prudence!

"Good heaven!" ſaid Belmour, breaking our mournful ſilence, with a ſigh, "there are other ſources of miſery then, beſides the pangs of diſappointed love, and the caprices of inhuman parents! Oh! 'tis a world

a world of nettles! a wilderneſs of briars and brambles, and the timid foot of Tenderneſs knows not which way to turn to find the ſhorn and cultivated path, where bloom the lilies of the cherub Peace, or Pleaſure flings her gadding woodbine ſprays, ſmooth and without a thorn.—Here take this droſs, child, for a part of *your* ſorrows, here is, at leaſt, a balſam: *mine* admit no cure."

An April ſunbeam, ſmiling through a tear, illuminated the countenance of the little cottager, as ſhe curtſied in grateful ſilence to her benefactor; while we purſued our journey, filled with a *holy melancholy pleaſure*, and reflecting (at leaſt it was the caſe with me) on the inaccurate calculations of thoſe who refer to a diſtant period, and another region the rewards of ſympathy and benevolence.—The generous act itſelf is Paradiſe!—the ſordid ſoul is hell!—the *hell*, the *grave* of every finer joy; each bliſs peculiar to Humanity!

SKETCHES OF PICTURESQUE SUBLIMITY.

WE had by this time paſſed the little village of Stone: a place of ſome eſtimation among the antiquaries, for its venerable church, and monuments of the pride and grandeur of former days. It had, alſo, in ancient times, a caſtle, whoſe haughty battlements might protect the lawleſs violence of dependant vaſſals; and alternately overawe the deſpiſed and injured peaſantry by their rude magnificence, or defy an inſulted monarch by their formidable ſtrength. But this ſeat of Norman Inſolence and Oppreſſion has lately ſurrendered its honours to the peaceful advances of Improvement and Civilization; and a modern habitation (in the poſſeſ-

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ſion of the Talbot family) is erected on the ſite of its intrenchments.

A ſcene of equal novelty and attraction now preſents itſelf to diverſify the picturesque graces of the road. Hitherto all had been gaiety, fertility, and rural beauty; but here the lover of more forcible impreſſions may trace the rude outlines of the dreadful and ſublime: not, indeed, ſketched with the ſame bold pencil as diſplays itſelf in the tremendous ſcenery of *Dover cliffs*, pillowing the ſtooping boſom of the thunder cloud, and bending with tottering horror o'er the ocean, but yet delineated with ſufficient force to impreſs with awe the imagination familiar with no other precipices than the proſpect from a one pair of ſtairs window.

From Shooter's Hill to the ſcene we are now contemplating, woods hills and valleys, villages and plantations (between which the buſy Thames, gay with the painted bark and gliding ſail, was perpetually

tually preſenting itſelf to the view) kept up a conſtant ſucceſſion of pleaſing and lively ideas; and reminded us continually of that ſhort and beautiful deſcription in the letters of the poet Gray, of the weſtern part of this county; of the poetical beauty of which that ſingularly faſtidious genius had the affectation to be aſhamed. "From every eminence," ſays he, "the eye catches ſome long reach of the Thames or Medway, with all their ſhipping: in the eaſt the ſea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white tranſient ſails and glittering blue expanſe with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn." Nor is the principal object of this delightful picture loſt even in this altered ſcene; but, on the contrary, pouring with a ſtill wider torrent, in a ſerpentine direction; and haſtening towards its junction with the Medway (its diſtant ſhore of Eſſex adorned with the fine views of Tilbury Fort, and a variety of other pleaſing objects) enriches a new group of ſcenery. But that which conſtitutes the principal diver-

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ſity is the proſpect of *Greenhithe*, and its tremendous chalk pits, which occupy almoſt the whole ſpace between the road and the river; and whoſe intermediate cliffs and promontories (if ſo I may call them) occaſionally crowned with a ſolitary houſe, or a tuft of half-verdant trees, preſent a ſcene of wildneſs and deſolation finely contraſtive of every thing our eyes had hitherto been enjoying.

As theſe pits, of a very conſiderable depth, are bounded by the high road, a rail is very properly provided, at ſome little diſtance from the brink, for the prevention of accidents: a precaution the neglect of which, on the cliffs of Dover, occaſioned, ſome few years ago, a very dreadful cataſtrophe: for the driver of a return chaiſe having, as is ſuppoſed, fallen aſleep with the reins in his hand, by which he dragged the horſes from the beaten path, they were "toppled down headlong" from the tremendous height, and literally daſhed to pieces. The traces breaking in

in the fall, the horſes were found in ſeparate places from the carriage and unfortunate driver, and each at a conſiderable diſtance from the other.

We were not, however, ſatisfied with the ſafe, but imperfect ſurvey which the right ſide of this rail afforded: for the full enjoyment of its ſublimity, it was neceſſary that we ſhould realize its dangers. Advancing, therefore, to the very edge, we began to meaſure the overhanging precipice with our eye. But the wild looks of our bewildered companion preſently reminded us of our indiſcretion; and I thought I ſaw him abſolutely preparing to execute upon the ſpot the reſolution we ſo much dreaded.

O giant fiend! whoſe haggard eye,
Blaſting each hope of future joy,
In wildering terror reſtleſs roves;
Intent, with ſavage pride, to ſeize
Whate'er the frantic purpoſe moves,
Whate'er may Reaſon's current freeze,
And Reſolution's guardian pow'r
Pervert in Sorrow's languid hour

While

(While keen Remorſe aloof attends)
To fell Deſtruction's baneful ends!

O fell Deſpair! ſhould e'er my ſoul
Dejected feel thy dark controul,
May then, as I eccentric ſtray,
In lonely grief retir'd to mourn,
No yawning chaſm croſs my way,
No rapid torrents winding bourn,
No cliff that o'er the raging main
Projecting lours, and turns his brain,
Who, forward bent, with 'ventrous gaze
The foaming ſurge beneath ſurveys.

Ah! when the melancholy pang aſſails,
And pale Deſpondence wrings the feeling heart,
Too oft, dread fiend! thy ſullen power prevails,
And barbs too oft the ſelf-deſtroying dart.
There are who yielding to affliction's ſmart,
Cheriſh each ſullen fiend of Fancy's train,
To every ſcene the darkeſt hues impart,
And conjure phantoms in the working brain;—
Who, all alive in every throbbing vein
To wild Imagination's lawleſs power,
The gloomy perturbation ſcarce reſtrain
When lonely Silence rules the darkling hour.
To ſuch,—if chance along the level meads
(While o'er its breaſt the weeping oziers play)
Whiſpering ſoft murmurs to the waving reeds,
The purling riv'lets ſlow meanders ſtray;—
E'en ſcenes like theſe—(what time the lunar ray
Spangles the dimpling wave, and tolling ſlow,
The ſolemn knell, as holy legends ſay,
Scares from the death-bed ſcene the hovering fiend away)

——E'en ſcenes like theſe may feed the deſperate woe
Till fearful fancies riſe; and dark Diſmay
The ſeat of guiding Reaſon overthrow;
Prompting the deed that Nature ſhrinks to hear,
And meek Compaſſion waters with a tear.
Ah! ne'er may ſuch, while throbs the wildering brain,
With devious ſtep this tottering brink attain.

But the converſation at Dartford ſeemed to have furniſhed me with a fortunate antidote againſt the "toys of deſperation" which the proſpect had preſented to the imagination of Belmour; and I began to expatiate, with apparent enthuſiaſm, on the convenient ſhelter which ſuch a place, if well embowered by romantic foreſts, might afford for the ſolitary cell of the victim of diſappointed paſſion.

6 NO 63

EFFERVESCENCES OF POLITICAL ENTHUSIASM.

"DO you not think, my friend!" continued I, "that in the diſtant wilds of America, or, perhaps, in the deſolated ſcenes of Europe (which the deſpots of the continent are ſo zealouſly labouring to depopulate) we could find ſome ſuch deſirable ſpot, where we might ſcope our caverns in the chalky rock, and forſwear the tedious ſociety of man.

Let raging tyrants, with malignant pride,
Diſplay their talents in the *public ſcene*,
In glittering arms o'er groaning myriads ride,
And drench with purple guilt the peaceful green.

Let them, ſtill jealous of imagin'd rights,
Sound the dire clarion, ſpread the clouds of war,
To rouſe their frantic ſlaves, and quench the lights
Of Reaſon's ſun, and Freedom's polar ſtar.

Let ſenſeleſs crowds, aſſembled at their nod,
Smit with ſtrange hate of Liberty! ariſe;
To *humbled Pride reſtore Oppreſſion's rod*,
And lift the fallen IDOL to the ſkies.

Let them, enamour'd of the galling yoke,
Ruſh on to death; and *orphans*, *widows* leave
The chains they purchas'd with their blood to brook;
To toil rewardleſs, and unpitied grieve.

Let them (for, why, when monarchs give command,
Should Senſe or Virtue check the vaſſal's zeal?)
Againſt their GUARDIANS lift the furious hand,
And in their CHAMPIONS' boſoms plunge the ſteel.

We—we, my friend, while ſuch mad paſſions reign,
Such ſervile folly rules the buſtling crew,
Will fly, indignant, from the thankleſs train,
And leave the ingrates their ruin to purſue.

OH! better far, within ſome cloiſter's gloom,
Some foreſts ſhade, or cavern's lone retreat,
To waſte in ſullen ſighs our youthful bloom,
And each ſad ſun with pining ſorrow greet;

Better, forſwearing Nature's genuine right,
Withdrawn for ever from *her* ſocial law,
To live entomb'd, and bid eternal Night
Round the lone head her ſullen curtain draw;

Better than mingling in ſuch ſcenes as theſe,
To aid the fiend DESTRUCTION's raging hand,
See her fell gripe each PUBLIC VIRTUE ſeize,
And ſcourge fair FREEDOM from each groaning Land!

Ah!

Ah! better far, forgetting and forgot,
Sequeſter'd, to the peaceful grave to glide,
From Fortune's wheel withdraw our anxious lot,
And crimes we can't *prevent*, at leaſt *avoid*.

Then, Belmour, come! together let us ſtray,
And ſeek ſome hermit's deep embower'd retreat;
Tune for each other's ear the mournful lay,
And all the anguiſh of our ſouls repeat.

Thy tender woes from out her ſecret bower,
To ſweet reſponſe ſhall wooe the *bird of eve*;
But mine, more loud, ſhall, at the midnight hour,
Wake the ſhrill echoes; teach the rocks to grieve;
The woods, the vales, the mountains to reply,
And Nature's ſelf to join the deep-drawn ſigh

For, oh! I mourn for worlds!—for myriads mourn
Still doom'd in bonds and wretchedneſs to ſigh!—
Againſt themſelves the ſharpen'd ſteel who turn,
And forge the fetters which they ſhould deſtroy.

And ſhalt thou, FREEDOM (oh! my boding ſoul!)
In the ſtern graſp of TYRANNY expire?
While conquering DESPOTS rage without control,
And SUPERSTITION round thy funeral pyre
Exulting ſmiles, and ſees, with ſavage pride,
Each hope of HUMAN HAPPINESS *deſtroy'd!*

I had touched upon a theme of more potent influence than I was aware. The boſom of Belmour was not yet ſteeled by

his own particular ſorrows againſt the intereſts, or the miſeries of mankind: and no ſooner were the combinations of deſpotiſm, and the ſtruggles of liberty recalled to his imagination, than his mien aſſumed its wonted dignity, his eyes began to ſparkle with indignation, and after liſtening with eager attention to my rhapſody, he yielded to an enthuſiaſm, that inſpired me with ſome hopes of being able to divert his melancholy to an object of more active ambition; more uſeful to mankind, and more honourable, as I then imagined, to his country (for Britain was yet no party to this unnatural war) than monaſteries, hermitages, and the mortifying fopperies of ſuperſtition. But the fervour was of ſhort duration; as is generally the caſe with that enthuſiaſm, which is the effect only of appeals to the imagination, rather than of principles reſulting from actual feeling and preſent experience. From the colourings of diſtant calamities, however real, the mind is preſently recalled by the appeals of home-felt impreſſions, whether

ther of a more painful or more pleaſurable nature.

So ignorant of the natural movements of the human heart are thoſe modern ſophiſts, who pretend that reaſon is to be deluded by declamations on *fancied grievances*, or even that the moſt animated remonſtrances againſt *real oppreſſion* can excite a ſerious diſcontent in the popular mind, till the enormity of the evil has *brought home the conſequent ſuffering to every man's buſineſs and boſom*.—Remove but the *real cauſes of complaint*; nay, keep them but at ſuch a diſtance, that they may not *goad the boſoms* of thoſe who have the capacity to act, and whatever may be the tranſient influence of poets and orators on the heated fancies of a few, every one will quickly find, like Belmour, ſome *perſonal feeling*, ſome *individual intereſt* to overpower the *ſympathies of imagination*, and reſtore the momentary wanderer to *himſelf!*

THE STORM—A RETROSPECT.

"THIS is ſomewhat unlucky," ſaid Ambulator, obſerving the gathering clouds, which began to threaten us with ſomething like a ſerious ſhower. "Not at all," replied I, "for we have ſhelter near at hand," looking back towards the gardens and plantations of Mr. Roebuck—(better known by the name of their late proprietor, Mr. Calcraft) "Here are ſhelter from the rain, and beautiful proſpects for the eye. Theſe grounds well provided with a charming luxuriancy of ſhade and foliage, which command ſo delightful a view of the winding Thames and oppoſite ſhores of Eſſex, ſhall afford a canopy ſufficient to ward off the ſhower. Trifles, like theſe, muſt not diſturb the ſerenity of the PERIPATETIC.

"For

"For my part, nothing puts me out of my way; or diſturbs the tranquil independence with which I ſo conſtantly purſue the beautiful phenomena of nature: a purſuit which no accidental changes of the weather can diſappoint: for which of theſe changes does not produce ſome additional food for ſcience or imagination? If, as now, a ſudden cloud envelope the ſplendid face of heaven, I compare the appearances with the theories which have endeavoured to explain them. If a ſtorm ſucceeds, I look around for the ſhelter of ſome cottage, or little ale-houſe, by the way ſide, where the converſation and manners of an order of ſociety, whoſe habits, ſentiments, and opinions are ſo widely different from what the uſual intercourſes of life preſent me, may paſs in entertaining review before me; or, if matters come to the worſt, as in the preſent inſtance, I accommodate myſelf under the ſhade of ſome tree, or hovel, and contemplate the operations of nature; ſee the light miſts that had been rarified by the warmth of the lower atmoſ-

phere, condenſed again by the colder region of the air above, and precipitated in lucid drops to the gaping earth, from which they had formerly been attracted.

" And, apropos enough, to the ſubject of our late converſation. It was with a *diſaſter* like this, if ſuch, we are fine gentlemen enough to call the ſhower now pattering over our heads"—(for we were by this time under ſecure ſhelter) " that the adventure I was formerly about to relate to you commenced.

" I had been ſauntering, on a bright and glowing day, towards the latter end of the ſummer, among the luxuriant fields of almoſt ripened corn, together with my friend Ariſor, the companion of my temporary retreat, and the ſentimental Wentworth, whom we had caſually encountered in the midſt of the market-place at Bourn, (through which he was paſſing on an excurſion to the North;) and was admiring, in common with them, the fertile and extenſive

tenſive ſcenery commanded from the range of hills that form the boundary of the immenſe fens of Lincolnſhire, when, unexpectedly, we found the ſky overcaſt with every appearance of an approaching thunder-ſtorm. What was to be done? We looked around for ſhelter: but neither houſe, nor hovel, nor ſheep-cot was to be ſeen; and while we were hurrying with unavailing ſpeed towards the village, where Ariſor and myſelf had fixed our temporary reſidence, the clouds began to burſt, the rain to fall, the thunder to roar, and the lightning to blaze along the louring canopy of heaven. Shelter of ſome kind was abſolutely neceſſary, or what might, by no very hyperbolical metaphor, be called drowning, was the inevitable conſequence; and though we were aware that trees, being excellent conductors of the electric fluid, are not the beſt ſhelter at ſuch a ſeaſon; yet, as the appearance of the lightning was by no means ſuch as to excite alarm from that quarter, we fled immediately to a thick natural harbour of thorns

and wild flowering ſhrubs, which crowned a high bank, ſeparating ſome incloſures, and which, in its turn, was ſo ſheltered by a tuft of branching oaks, as to afford, altogether, ſufficient protection againſt the only part of the ſtorm, from which we were apprehenſive of any inconvenience.

From this ſituation, we meditated with a degree of enthuſiaſtic admiration, thoſe ſublime and beautiful phenomena againſt which Terror and Superſtition ſo abſurdly ſhut the eyes of nine tenths of mankind; —heard the aweful voice of OMNIPOTENCE, in the deep roaring thunder, which *bade the noxious particles that infected the atmoſphere diſperſe*,—and *they were diſperſed!* and ſaw, in the vollied lightnings, the winged meſſengers of the ſame ALMIGHTY BENEFACTOR reſtore to the overloaded air the ſalubrious elaſticity, upon which the vital energy of created matter ſo eminently depends. Nor were we leſs delighted, as the ſtorm retired, to ſee the denſe and ſlaty clouds, which lately curtained

tained the whole horiſon, recede before the glowing, half-tranſparent miſts, rarifying, as they advanced, till the ſun, at length, broke forth again (as now, through yon bright veil of clouds) to reſtore, with encreaſing ſplendour, the wonted azure, and encourage us to renew our ramble. We directed, however, our courſe towards our little homely village, with which we rightly enough conjectured, our friend Wentworth would be conſiderably delighted.

THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

"WELL! thou art a rude, and ruinated pile," ſaid he, looking up at the little tottering ſpire, as we entered the wicket that guards the church-yard from invading cattle;—" thou art, indeed, but a crumbling atom of Gothic piety, and wouldſt

wouldſt not have been *large enough*—no, nor *grand enough* either, to enſhrine the ale barrels and butts of precious Malmſey of the fat prebendaries of thoſe proud cathedral piles, that lifted their gorgeous turrets to the ſkies about the time thou wert erected. —But, it is well.—One views theſe ſtooping ivy-mantled walls without a ſigh: they remind us of no melancholy decline of tranſient proſperity; no ruined families, doomed to experience the painful deſcent from affluence to penury; no once populous city crumbling into ruins, to ſwell the triumph of an overgrown metropolis, leaving to the ſcanty remnant of its wretched inhabitants, the bitter legacy of ancient pride, and the mortifying remembrance of former grandeur.

"Happy, humble Thurlby! the pain of theſe tranſitions is unknown to thee. Secure in thy aguiſh bog, thy coarſe unlettered clowns, born to the indefeaſible inheritance of ignorance and obſcurity, hail their unvaried lot with cheerfulneſs and contentment, nor envy the more ſplendid fate

fate they never had the misfortune to experience!—And thou, too,—thou little ſkeleton of a ſanctuary!—thou art right to ſhroud thy meanneſs in the privacy of this marſhy valley. How abſurd would thy half-hewn form appear thruſting its three foot ſpire above the ſummit of the neighbouring hill, as a beacon for the giddy freight of ridicule!—like thoſe ambitious coxcombs (*ſans* wit, *ſans* ſenſe, *ſans* taſte, *ſans* every thing!) who, in defiance of Reaſon and Nature, will ſhew their vanity, and proclaim their impotence, by lifting above the level of ordinary occupation, the important nothingneſs of their pigmy minds!

"And yet," reſumed he, after a pauſe, and having paced attentively two or three times round the little pile—"And yet, circumſcribed as are thy homely walls, they witneſs, perhaps, more fervent effuſions of heart-felt piety than all the ſtately temples of modern times—whoſe external grandeur vainly endeavours to render to the Creator that honour which the ingratitude

titude of the votary's heart, ſo thoughtleſsly with-holds! — Within theſe walls, perhaps, the bonds of fraternal affection, which unite the little ſociety in virtuous harmony have been more cloſely knit. Here, Charity has learned to beſtow her frugal mite to the beſt advantage; ſimple Nature has indulged her grateful feelings for the humble bleſſings that are ſcattered around, and artleſs Purity has poured forth her ſainted prayer. Here, too, virgin Innocence has bluſhed at the unpolluted altar, that yielded her to the honeſt lover of her unbiaſſed choice; and the venerable paſtor, whoſe unſullied life accorded with his leſſon, has enforced, perhaps, the duties of morality and religion by the example he was the firſt to ſet."—

The loud laugh of Ariſor interrupted this rhapſody.

—"Tut!" ſaid he, "we are not now in Arcadia. The *ſimplicity* of Thurlby's clowns would give you, I fear, but an indifferent

different image of Saturnian days. I would not lay a bottle of home-brewed ale againſt all the maidenheads in the village, that yon ruſtics, who are in ſuch eager converſation, are not, at this inſtant, indulging at our expence, in ſcurrility and defamation, all thoſe malignant paſſions which a powdered head and a coat finer than their own ſo naturally excite in their boſoms. And, as for your virgin Innocence, and the *purity* of their affections—of theſe, perhaps, the beadle (who, in theſe retreats of rural ſimplicity, is generally the matrimonial father of the pariſh) can give you a tolerable account. But the cream of the jeſt, which you have ſo ironically dilated upon, is the exemplary piety which ſo uniformly diſtinguiſhes the clergy of theſe humble retreats of devotion. Well, well, all this is very excuſable in a young enthuſiaſt proceeding on his firſt excurſion into the country; and pleaſant food enough it will be for my laughing ſpleen when we meet again, in the winter, in our convivial circles, to hear you lament your diſappointment,

and

and rail at the ſabbatical ſanctity of grey-coated fox hunters, drunkards, and debauchees—who import from the town and the univerſity into the moſt obſcure retreats of ruſtic labour, the vices and follies which you innocently enough ſuppoſe, can thrive only in the impure atmoſphere of a metropolis. Biſhops and prebendaries may, for ought I know, be conſpicuous enough for their profligacy in the higher circles; but certain it is, that I have alſo known, in a little dirty village, the crow to be the worſt ſcreech owl in the flock, and have heard the reverend libertine of an obſcure hedge ale-houſe, hiccough out an oath with bolder vehemence, and roar for a libidinous catch with more ſalacious glee than the moſt profligate of his congregation. Nay, no longer ago than the laſt Sunday, in this very village, we had a proof how much more is expected by theſe holy men, from the influence of their theory than their example. The pious gownſman had deſcanted, with particular pathos, on the duty and utility of obſerving the Lord's Day;

Day; and had proved, beyond the ſhadow of a vulgar doubt, the neceſſity, according to the principles of morality as well as religion, of giving our horſes and our oxen, as well as ourſelves and our ſervants, the ſabbath, as a ſeaſon of reſt from toil. The congregation gave, as uſual, the implicit aſſent of ſilence; and I, for my own part, bleſſed the holy man, in my heart, for the eaſe and comfort which his ſermon muſt occaſion, for one day in ſeven, to the quadrupeds of the ſurrounding country; not one of whom, I ventured to prognoſticate, would be wearied again upon the Lord's Day, at any rate, for the enſuing ſix weeks. But, as I was returning to my temporary reſidence, full of theſe reflections, my ears were unexpectedly wounded by the quick beating of iron hoofs behind.—*Unhallowed wretch*, exclaimed I, turning towards the impious ſound, *hadſt thou attended, as was thy duty, to the pious ſervice of the day*—But my exclamation was cut ſhort in the middle. It was the reverend moraliſt himſelf, driving like mad, to a diſtant village, where

where another congregation were gaping for a ſecond edition of the ſame demonſtrative arguments."

THE GRAVES.

THE paſtoral taſte of our ſentimental enthuſiaſt was a little ſhocked at this coarſe picture of rural manners; and he ſeemed perfectly unprepared to give credit to a deſcription, that made Vice and Inſincerity inhabitants of thoſe peaceful vales, where he expected to meet with nothing but nymphs and ſwains of unpolluted ſoul, and paſſions harmonized to the tender innocence of the ſtock-dove, and the playful lambkin. Turning, however, to another object, and recalling to mind thoſe claſſical images, with which he was rather more familiar, than with the real picture of ruſtic manners

manners as ſketched by the rude hand of unaſſiſted Nature, he began to range with curious eye among the graſſy tombs, that every way preſented themſelves before us.

Pallida Mors æquo pulſat pede pauperum tabernes,
Regumque turres,

ſaid he; A quotation, by the way, from which it ſhould ſeem, that the Romans, in the time of Horace, had the cuſtom of kicking with their heels at one another's doors, inſtead of uſing the preſent more elegant refinement of the knocker. Then taking me by the arm, and pointing and moralizing in the beautiful and natural language of Gray;—every delineation of whoſe poetic pencil ſtarts, as it were, into life before one, whenever a ſcene of this kind preſents itſelf—

Beneath theſe rugged elms, this yew tree's ſhade,
Where heaves the earth in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet ſleep,

continued he; and then, ſtill indulging his fondneſs for quotation, bade me obſerve how

Even

Even thoſe bones from inſult to protect,
Some frail memorial ſtill erected nigh,
With uncouth rhimes, and ſhapeleſs ſculpture deck,
Implores the paſſing tribute of a ſigh.

My ſoul—which the ſolemn proſpect of "the peopled church-yard," ever wont to diſpoſe to melancholy, as bringing freſh to remembrance, that cruel deſtiny, whoſe wintry breath had ſo often ſtripped from the tender bloſſom of my youth each neighbouring bud, each tender, dear connection, leaving the ſtinted growth of my ungenial ſummer a ſolitary relic, on the half-blighted ſtem of life!—My ſoul, my Lucio! ſtill prone, on every melancholy occaſion to fly forth, and viſit the graſſy ſhrine of our departed friendſhip, wanted not the aſſiſtance of the plaintive muſe to accommodate it to reflections congenial with the ſurrounding ſcene. Yet I indulged the humour of my friend Wentworth for poetical quotation—as I knew him to be one of thoſe, with whom even a moral ſentiment has more ſterling value, when it is known not to be the original

ginal coinage of him who gives it currency.

"Potent charm of ſimplicity!" ſaid I. "This is the teſt of excellence (which "*the mourner, laviſh of his tears for lucre's venal mead*" muſt ne'er expect,) when the ſcenes of Nature recall the deſcriptions of the Poet, and he appears only to have anticipated the reflections which one imagines the objects of themſelves muſt have inſpired. This is the touching charm never to be hoped from "*the faint verſe that flows not from the heart, but mourns in labour'd ſtrains—the price of fame!*"

O lov'd SIMPLICITY! *be thine the prize!*
Aſſiduous ART *correct her page in vain!*
His be the palm who, guiltleſs of diſguiſe,
Contemns the power—the dull reſource to feign!

Soft as the ſtrain of love ſick Hammond flows,
'Twas his FOND HEART *effus'd the melting theme:*
Ah! never could AONIA'S HILL *diſcloſe*
So fair a fountain, or ſo lov'd a ſtream.

Such is the language of poor Shenſtone; who, if he had but little merit of a higher

a higher nature, had, at leaſt, that of delineating with affecting ſimplicity, the tender feelings of his own heart.—" But come," continued I, pacing the aweful ground, " let us indulge this moody fancy! Let us meditate together among theſe humble tumuli—theſe mole-hills that muſt one day give up their dark inhabitants; and as you have already recalled the diſtinguiſhed work of one melancholy bard to our remembrance, let us, as we wander among the ruſtic monuments, muſe over them in the *no leſs beautiful*, though *leſs celebrated* ſtanzas of another, whoſe hours of blackeſt deſpondency produced the firſt genuine ſpecimen of the Engliſh Elegy. —Let us mourn, my friend, with the verſatile, but unhappy Gay, how

——Hope after hope expires!
Friend after friend, joy after joy is loſt;
Our deareſt wiſhes feed the funeral fires,
And life is purchaſed at too dear a coſt!"

" Poor broken-hearted Gay!" exclaimed Wentworth.—" Yet, he is not ſingular. Tell me, Sylvanus," continued he, purſuing

ſuing the melancholy thought — tell me—when hopeleſs love — when dying friendſhip—or the world's neglect have wrung thy too feeling heart, haſt thou not alſo known the ſtate of mind, to envy even "*theſe cold ſhades the laſt retreat of grief?*" Haſt thou not alſo ſighed,

To me, alas! what boots the light of heav'n,
While ſtill new miſeries mark my deſtin'd way,
Whether to my unhappy lot be giv'n
Death's long ſad night, or life's ſhort buſy day?"

You will perceive, that whatever we might be to any body elſe in a *poſt chaiſe*, my friend and I were at leaſt *agreeable companions* enough to each other in a church-yard.—But Ariſor, with whoſe taſte theſe melancholy quotations did not ſo exactly harmonize, had turned another way, and was pointing with his ſtick to a high gilt monument which proudly overlooked the reſt.

"With all my heart," ſaid Wentworth; "let us go and ſee it:—though theſe proud

monuments, which would fain immortalize the cenſurable vanity the duſt ſhould cover, delight not me.—

Can ſtoried urn, or animated buſt,
Back to its manſion call the fleeted breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the ſilent duſt,
Or Flattery ſoothe the dull cold ear of Death?"

"And, after all, could the proud duſt be *ſenſate*—could gales of grief and dews of fond regret become an acceptable incenſe to the ſhrine of departed Oſtentation, I doubt whether the moſt ſuperb labours of maſonry could allure half the crowd of real mourners to repeat their viſits, that might be again, and again attracted to the *ſimpleſt ſtone*, by the following epitaph, deſigned for an honeſt labourer, in a country not very diſtant:—

O'er titled duſt tho' prouder tombs may raiſe,
Bluſh, flatter'd Grandeur, at poor Beaver's praiſe.
Mean tho' his lot, yet Oakham's griefs proclaim
A nobler far, and leſs ſuſpected fame.
Would you, the good man's real value know,
His tomb conſult not, but each neighbour's woe.

The

"The heart that feels the truth of theſe alluſions ſhall reviſit the ſtone that bears them, and the eye ſhall water it with a tear, as long as any one who knew the character ſhall ſurvive: and tradition, aſſiſted by the modeſt verſe, ſhall perpetuate the pious ſenſation, when the gilded ornaments of this monument ſhall have loſt their gariſh luſtre, and the inſcription—— But let us learn what the inſcription ſays."

In Memory of

CORNELIUS BLEWIT,

Who died the 5th of January, 1784,

Aged 66 Years.

Man ſprung from duſt, to duſt returns again,
Fraught with diſeaſe, and overwhelm'd with pain:
Short are his days, his joys much ſhorter ſtill,
Blended with care, and checker'd o'er with ill.
He's happy, then, who ſoon reſigns his breath,
And feels betimes the icy hand of Death.
So, wife and children, mourn no more,
I'm only gone a ſtep before.

"However little," ſaid I—obſerving the tranquil, melancholy pleaſure theſe lines had diffuſed over the countenance of Wentworth—"However little you may approve the tinſel fopperies of the ſculptor, I fancy you are, in no ſmall degree, ſurpriſed at the different taſte of the poet."

"True! and I have only to lament that the former, by the fine golden flouriſh with which he has decorated the bottom of the ſtone, made it neceſſary to curtail the laſt couplet, which would otherwiſe, I ſuppoſe, have had the ſame number of feet with the reſt.

"But who might this Cornelius Blewit be?" continued he—looking around among the mud-built cottages, to ſee if he could diſcover a manſion fit to have been his former habitation. "This epitaph is certainly above the genius of the pariſh clerk—or even of the pedantic ſchoolmaſter of a paltry village.

"Poor

"Poor vain duſt, that mouldereſt underneath! thou didſt, perhaps, expect a prouder verſe—a pompous legend of titles and exploits, to tell how great thou wert in public,—how wiſe—how philoſophic in thy obſcure retreat!"—

THE GIPSY.

——"HA! ha! poor muſe-ridden Wentworth!"—ſaid Ariſor, interrupting him, "the wings of thy eccentric fancy have borne thee again into the regions of deluſion:—as far from the point as morality from a canting face, a full-bottom wig from genuine ſanctity and ſcience, or real chaſtity from the gravity and furious affectation of the prude.—Cornelius Blewit was a GIPSY."

"And yet," ſaid I, "you have perhaps rather undervalued than exalted his importance: for with the alteration of no ſingle circumſtance—except the change of ſcene, from fertile England to the deſert of Arabia—the duſt we now deſpiſe, might during life, have been entitled to its ſeraglio of beauties, and its guard of eunuchs; and have ordered the heads of a hundred captives to be ſtruck off, to appeaſe his capricious ſpleen, whenever a tempeſtuous wind prevented an excurſion of plunder—or a cruel fair one had neglected the mandate of his love.

"*Take phyſic, Pomp!*—Ambition check thy raſhneſs.—Pultowa's loſs ſunk Sweden's madman nearly to this level—though Bender trembled at his ſhattered greatneſs;—and an unfortunate day on the banks of the Ganges might have rendered the mighty ſon of Philip (like him whoſe mouldering bones we are moralizing upon) the monarch only of a wandering tribe of robbers—as much deſpiſed, though,

though, I fear, not ſo little deteſted, as Cornelius Blewit.

"In ſhort, Cornelius was KING of the Gipſies; and uſed every year, attended by his *Royal Family*, and *Officers of State*, to viſit this ruſtic ſcene. He kept his *Court* at the houſe of that ſame honeſt, homely, grey-headed farmer, or publican—or publican farmer, if you pleaſe—for he is both, under whoſe roof we have our preſent reſidence; and in that very parlour where preſently we will enjoy our excellent tankard of home-brewed amber, foaming and laughing o'er the plated brim, was erected his ruſtic throne; from which, like another Attila in his royal village, he ſtretched the venerated ſceptre of his uncontrouled authority over a predatory band of adoring ſubjects."

"I met the wanderers there," ſaid Ariſor, "in one of my juvenile excurſions; nor ever beheld I a ſet of merrier—or, apparently, more harmleſs beings. And be-

lieve me, the venerable majeſty of Cornelius—the deſpotic ruler of the *myſterious counſellors of Fate*, was regarded with no little reverence by the ſwains and country maidens.—Nay, and what will ſurpriſe you, his arrival was hailed with no ſmall degree of pleaſure by the whole village: for the *hoary monarch* and *his nobles* ſpent their money liberally, and (unlike the rulers of more civilized ſocieties) paid with punctuality for what they ordered: and I have found it, upon enquiry, to be an invariable rule with theſe vagrants never to rob in the neighbourhood of their ſettled haunts.

"But the majeſtic nod and the imperial frown Death values not.—King Cornelius ſleeps in the humble grave—and the Five Bells at Thurlby is no longer a royal reſidence. The palace and the empire have ſhared one common revolution: though the latter, it ſeems, has been conſiderably the greater loſer by the change—for not only the family, but the nation of our hero

is

is reported conſiderably to have declined from its ancient ſplendor, ſince it has been deprived of his wiſe adminiſtration, and to have ſunk into the contempt of thoſe very allies of the village, by whom they were formerly courted and eſteemed."

Such, in every ſociety (be it ſmall or great) are the fatal conſequences of bad government:—an evil to which it would not, perhaps, be extravagant to refer nine tenths of all the folly, vice, and miſery with which the world is ſo unhappily deformed.

But, before I am whirled from this ſubject into any long digreſſion, it will be proper for me juſt to obſerve that a ſolemn deputation is annually ſent to viſit the venerated tomb—to pay it, as is ſuppoſed, ſome myſterious honours—and to keep it in conſtant repair:—a practice which would do honour to more regular ſocieties; and the neglect of which is a diſgrace to the ſurviving relatives of departed grandeur: for what can be more

ridiculous or irreverend, than, after immenſe ſums have been expended on ſepulchral monuments, to let them moulder away in neglect, and mingle with that duſt they were deſigned to immortalize!

THE MANIAC.

"BUT let us have done," ſaid I, "with the gipſies, and their tomb, and repair to the other ſide of the church-yard; where, on a ſmall flat ſtone, is the following beautiful little epitaph—

Free from this dream of life, this maze of care,
The tender mother reſts, and friend ſincere:
She follow'd virtue as her trueſt guide,
Liv'd like a Chriſtian—like a Chriſtian died.

"I know not how it is, but Thurlby, the moſt ſtupid of all the habitations of Ignorance,

rance, has ſome as beautiful, and as few ridiculous epitaphs as ever I ſaw in any church-yard I have viſited."

"But let us ſeek this inſcription," ſaid Wentworth, "the aſhes over which ſuch a panegyric could be pronounced without ridicule muſt deſerve the tribute of an applauding tear."

We obeyed with alacrity. But as we were turning round the corner of the church, we were ſurpriſed by a ſlow and tremulous voice, warbling with exquiſite harmony, but in ſo faint and mournful a key, that (as the wind ſet directly from us) we could ſcarcely diſtinguiſh the words.

Tell me, ye exquiſite powers of nature, who attune the finer nerves to mournful ſympathy!—why did my heart vibrate, and my pulſe beat in ſolemn uniſon to the melting cadence?—Why was my breath ſuſpended, and my foot rivetted to the

conſecrated turf?—And by what myſterious mechaniſm did the unconſcious tear ſteal down my cheek reſponſive to the tremulous note?——Here was no ſelfiſh retroſpect: no anticipation of correſpondent ſuffering.—Ye Sceptics! there was none.—I had not ſeen the mourner—I knew not the complexion of her woes—Deſire and Apprehenſion ſtood equally aloof.—And yet I pitied—and I wept!

"Oh! there is ſomething holy in the voice of ſorrow"—ſaid my young Enthuſiaſt, wiping away the tear—"and woe to that degraded ſoul that feels not the awful impreſſion!"

"Huſh!"—ſaid Ariſor, ſoftly—"this is the bewildered maiden whoſe melancholy wanderings, and the impenetrable myſtery which ſurrounds her, have given riſe to ſo many fabulous legends.—She is ſitting, I dare ſay—as is her practice, on he gra ve we were going to viſit, and which

which ſhe calls her mother's ſepulchre.—Let us pauſe, and liſten unobſerved; for the inſtant ſhe ſees us, her ſong is at an end; and ſhe herſelf will diſappear like a ſhadow."

We went ſilently along by the ſide of the church, as near as we could without being obſerved; and liſtened, with an almoſt ſuperſtitious reverence, to the mournful dirge—which ſhe ſeveral times repeated.

Sadly ſweet, and incoherent ſtrain! the ſenſations with which I heard thee have indelibly imprinted thee on my mind—nor ſhall memory ever forego the mournful cadences with which thou wert accompanied.—Take, my companions, —take the myſterious words;—but where is the pining Philomel—the neſtling woodlark—or the dying ſwan—can give the murmured melody of the notes that wrung my liſtening ſoul.

Sepulchre of a parent dear!
Oft conſcious of my lone complaint,
Oh! treaſure ſtill the holy tear:—
Chaſte tribute to a martyr'd ſaint!

Ah! what can hopeleſs anguiſh more—
On earth—in heav'n without a friend—
Than thus her guiltleſs crime deplore,
And ſighs and tears repentant blend?

Oh faithleſs Love!—oh conſtant woe!
Myſterious ſuffering ne'er to ceaſe!
And muſt the tears that ceaſeleſs flow
Ne'er lull the mangl'd ſoul to peace?

Then come again, ſad ſoother, Death!
Again I ſeek thy gloomy cave;
Reſign the painful—fruitleſs breath
Which heav'n for lingering ſufferance gave!

Sepulchre of a parent dear!
Oft conſcious of my lone complaint,
Oh! treaſure ſtill the holy tear:—
Chaſte tribute to a martyr'd ſaint!

The curioſity inſpired by this myſterious dirge, drew us inſenſibly nearer and nearer to the corner of the church, till at laſt we ventured to ſtretch forward our heads, and ſteal one glance at the melancholy ſyren. She was ſitting on the ground

ground by the ſide of the tomb, arrayed in a looſe white robe. Her form was ſmall and delicate; and gave no faint idea of what we generally conceive of a ſpirit, or a fairy. But as her long black hair was entirely diſhevelled, the poſture in which ſhe reclined, leaning with both her hands upon the grave, prevented us from ſeeing her face. Yet was there an air of exquiſite melancholy diffuſed over the whole form, and fancy recognized, through the obtruding veil, the intereſting features of feminine beauty, emaciated by unremitting ſorrow.

We had not ſtood long in this attitude when the mourner, with a ſigh, lifted up her head. But ſhe no ſooner ſaw us, than, ſtarting from the ground, ſhe fled like a frighted bird. So that, except a ſingle glance of her tearful eyes, the back of a delicate and ſcarcely human form, floating in ſnowy veſtments before the gale, was all we were permitted to behold.

Poor

Poor ſtricken deer! why fleeſt thou from the eye whoſe balmy tear would ſooth thy rankling wound!—But it ſorts with the general practice of the world. For real Sorrow ſhuns with timid modeſty the aſſiſtance of Compaſſion, and leaves the gracious boon of Mercy to impudent Impoſture. *Seek*, then, thy objects, bleſt Benevolence.—Hunt them in ſilent ſhades and cold retreats—let the voice of thy comfort ſteal on them unawares, and thy bounty, like the unſeen dews of heaven, conceal the hand that ſheds it.

"Thus it always is," ſaid Ariſor—after gazing for ſome ſeconds on the point from whence ſhe diſappeared.—"Thus does ſhe always fly the face of ſtrangers: though with the neighbouring ruſtics, I hear, ſhe is become ſo far familiar, as to look ſteadily in their faces, and ſuffer ſuch of them as dare ſo far adventure, to approach within a few paces of the grave where ſhe ſits; but if even *they* attempt to come

come nearer, ſhe ſtarts and flies away, juſt as *we* have ſeen her.

THE GHOST.

"SHE will now wind round, at the back of the town, and bury herſelf in Bourn Wood—about half a mile from hence; where, during the ſummer months—(when only ſhe viſits this part of the country) ſhe is frequently ſeen plucking nuts, and berries, and wild fruits—upon which ſhe is ſuppoſed chiefly to ſubſiſt. How, and where ſhe diſpoſes of herſelf during the winter, no one has preſumed to gueſs: nor has any rational account been obtained, either of herſelf, or the cauſe of her inſanity. So extraordinary an appearance could not, however, fail of filling the ignorant with ſuperſtition; and the credu-

lous

lous ruſtics tell many curious and improbable ſtories about her.

"Bourn Wood has long had the reputation of being haunted; and ſuch dreadful ſhrieks are frequently heard reſounding from it, that the ſtouteſt cudgel-player in the county cannot paſs it by night, but each peculiar hair will ſtand an end with horror and amazement. The clowns will have it that the form we have ſeen is the ſpirit from which theſe lamentations proceed—as if the nightingale of the day could be the howling wolf of the night. Some tell you ſhe was really the daughter of the woman whoſe grave ſhe haunts:—a myſterious being about whom no one even pretends to know any thing—only that a few months before her death ſhe came a perfect ſtranger into the country, *the Lord knows why*, and *the Lord knows from where*, and that ſhe lived in total ſeclusion from the world, in a lonely houſe, at a ſmall diſtance. As for the apparition herſelf, they tell you that going, one ſummer's

mer's moonlight night, to meet her lover in the wood (though who or what this lover was, none of them, it ſeems, has ever formed a conjecture) ſhe was there inhumanly murdered—by him, as it is ſuppoſed; and that her mother, in conſequence, broke her heart. And this, they inform you, is the reaſon why the ghoſt haunts the grave by twilight, and at midnight the wood."—

"Nay, ſmile not too ſoon. I myſelf can witneſs for the truth of part of this tale—the haunting of the wood, I mean:—for during the time that I took up my reſidence in the village, oft—at the ſtill and ſolemn hour of midnight, when melancholy darkneſs reigned over the vault of heaven, I have heard———the loud hootings of the ſcreech-owl, and ſometimes the ſhrill cry of the bittern.

"How this ſtrange tale ſhould ever have gained credit, even from the ſuperſtitious cre-

credulity of Lincoln Fens, is too aſtoniſhing to conceive, eſpecially when we conſider that the tradition of the ghoſt and the murder can be traced by living authorities half a century farther back than the date of the *tomb ſtone*, or any memory of the intereſting little viſion by which it is occaſionally haunted. But when Ignorance once ſets herſelf ſeriouſly about believing, there is nothing ſo groſs, ſo palpably contradictory to the very evidence of her ſenſes, that ſhe cannot digeſt—or, at leaſt, which ſhe cannot make ſhift to ſwallow. And when once ſhe has got it quietly down, no matter of what ingredients it is compoſed; her conſtitution is not ſqueamiſh; nor has Reaſon a menſtruum in her whole materia medica can remove it again from the overloaded ſtomach."

The reader is not to take it into his head that we were, during the whole of this narrative, "under ſhade of harborous roof," wait-

waiting the returning favours of thoſe capricious ladies, the clouds. On the contrary, we are at this very minute not only ſafely houſed for the night, in our little inn, at the ancient village of Northfleet, but are regaling ourſelves, alſo, after our fatigue, with the luxury of mutton chops, and *port wine*—for ſo my landlady calls our beverage: though, I profeſs, I ſhould never have made the diſcovery, either its claſs or genus, had it not been for her kind aſſiſtance.

Having ſatisfied ourſelves with this nectar, and paid our devotions to the ſplendid glories of the declining ſun, we retired to our reſpective couches, to dream of the toils and pleaſures of the preceding day, and fit ourſelves for the fatigues of that which was to come. For my own part, however, the melancholy ſtate of Belmour's mind, and the promiſe he had made us of indulging our curioſity with the particulars of his melancholy ſtory, occupied my fancy ſo much that though they did not prevent

vent my ſleep, they diſturbed it with a thouſand dreams, full of ſituations of miſery, precipices of danger, and the wildeſt reſolutions of deſpair.

THE WANDERER.—INFANTILE ATTACHMENTS.

"I Had thought, my friend," ſaid Belmour—as we were the next morning renewing our journey in ſilent expectation of his mournful tale—"I had thought to have carried the melancholy hiſtory of my misfortunes in ſilence to the grave; for I have fled the countenance of man, till I thought the ſocial feeling was dead within me; and that the friend was no longer to be found to whom I could unboſom myſelf with confidence. But Providence, who has twice thrown you in my way, has awakened

awakened me to better reſolutions; and a gleam of melancholy ſatisfaction illuminates my mind ere I ſink into oblivion for ever. I feel the early attachment I have borne towards you revive within me.—(Ah! what can obliterate the fond impreſſions of the infant heart?)—I recollect the tender confidence that exiſted in our boyiſh days between us, and I cannot but regard it as a violation of friendſhip to die with a ſecret in my boſom locked up from your participation. Take, then, my melancholy ſtory; and when I am mouldering (as I ſoon ſhall be) in the peaceful grave, publiſh it, my dear Sylvanus, to the world, that parents may learn from my fatal cataſtrophe to check the cruel tyranny of command; and no more, attempting to bend the laws of Nature beneath the footſtool of uſurped Authority, to demand the ſacrifice of Virtue and Happineſs at the altar of imaginary Duty.

"As all the ſecrets of my childiſh heart were wont to be unfolded to you, I need not,

not, I believe, my friend, inform you at how early a period it was my fortune to form an attachment for Miſs Sedley; a young lady, whoſe reſidence in the vicinity of my father's country houſe, whoſe correſponding years, and, above all, whoſe ſweet and engaging diſpoſition rendered her the deareſt playmate, and almoſt the conſtant companion of my infancy.

" There is no ſtronger proof, my friend, (for I muſt ſtill indulge the habit of philoſophiſing with which my dear little companion and myſelf ſo often amuſed ourſelves, euen in the midſt of our childiſh paſtimes)—There is no ſtronger proof that the ſentiment of love is a *diſtinct* and *native* impreſſion of the heart, as ſeparable from friendſhip, as it is from deſire, than the ſtrong ſenſe of it which children often feel for each other long before the phyſical paſſion can have any ſhare in their emotions.

Oh!

"Oh! my friend! I fabricate no theory. I ſpeak with but too much confidence from the experience of my own heart.—I am confident I felt, even in my childhood, all the refined and pure emotions of this paſſion:—I have thrilled at the approach of my little charmer, and languiſhed in her abſence with ſenſations that friendſhip never could have inſpired—and you know I was not inſenſible to that attachment: and once in particular (I can never forget the delightful impreſſion) when preſſing her little coral lips, and ſtraining her to my boſom, with all the confidence of infant innocence, (for neither of us had completed our ninth year) I felt my little boſom glowing with all thoſe pure and lively tranſports which may conſtitute, perhaps, the chief enjoyment in thoſe bleſſed regions where I have yet, at times, ſome hope we may be united."

My heart could readily enough accord with theſe ſentiments of the melancholy Belmour, becauſe it could re-call im-

preſſions of a ſimilar nature itſelf.—There are few, perhaps, we may admit, that are conſcious of theſe early impreſſions, and many to whom nothing but the phyſical attachment is *ever* known.—But the eye is early organized to the perceptions of beauty, and the mind to an admiration of the charms of temper; and though the conſciouſneſs of female lovelineſs, and the ſympathy of correſpondent diſpoſitions, are more generally diffuſed at the age of manhood, yet are they not always withheld from ſportive Infancy.

Ah! witneſs thou, o'er whoſe untimely bier,
Cropp'd in thy ſmiling beauty's gayeſt bloom,
My Lyre, reſponſive to the trickling tear,
Wak'd the lorn echoes; thou whoſe ſilent tomb
My early muſe with dews and flow'rets deck'd:
Wild flowers, indeed, pluck'd from the lowly glade;
Yet ſuch might ſerve to ſhew thy kindred ſhade
A pure remembrance, and a fond reſpect—

Ah! witneſs thou to whom with early pride
I liſp'd in numbers, and I liſp'd of love;
For whom ſo oft my infant boſom ſigh'd,
And breath'd its fondneſs to the liſt'ning grove—
How thrill'd my boſom when thy accent kind
Spoke gentle confidence? how ſtood the tear
Big trembling in my eye, if chance the fear
Of favour'd rivals ſtung my anxious mind?

Nor

Nor you, ye ſages, with ſarcaſtic ſmile
The infant dawn of ſympathy deride!—
The honeſt throb of boſoms free from guile,
Unſway'd by intereſt,—unſeduc'd by pride!
'Tis hence, perhaps,—from this etherial glow,
(Where groſſer paſſion claims no ſordid part)
That all the fine, extatic feelings flow,
That lift the fancy, and expand the heart!
Hence all the quick perceptions; hence the nerve
That feels alike for all the ſentient ſphere;
For every joy a tranſport can reſerve,
For every ſorrow ſhed the pitying tear.
Yes, hence the Poet's Soul its genuine fire
May catch;—each glowing charm, each poliſh'd art;
And ev'n divine Philanthropy aſpire
To ſoothe the pangs of every throbbing heart.
This Shakeſpeare's rapid genius might beſtow,
Stodart's warm tint, and Howard's generous glow.

THE WANDERER.—PROGRESS OF ATTACHMENT.

THE agitation of his mind had interrupted for a while the narrative of Belmour; but a pauſe of tender melancholy

had no ſooner reſtored a degree of tranquility than he reſumed it in the following manner:

"As time enlarged and meliorated the charming perſon of my little Sophia, the ſprightly innocence of her mind matured into the moſt elevated graces of intellect; the playful good-nature of her childiſh diſpoſition ripened into the ſofteſt charms of ſentiment and temper; and the cheerful bud of vivacity that attracted my early gaze, expanded into the brighteſt bloom of wit and ingenuity that ever fixed the enraptured attention of the lover.—What wonder then, that as I grew up, the inclinations of childiſh paſtime ſhould be meliorated into thoſe of ſentimental intercourſe? or that the ſmile with which I always hailed her approach ſhould now be ſo frequently ſucceeded by a ſigh, and accompanied by the glance of pleading tenderneſs.—In ſhort, my whole ſoul was engroſſed by the tendereſt paſſion that ever warmed the expectations of a lover.—This, however,

however, nothing but my looks revealed: looks which I not only perceived to be underſtood, but alſo to be received in ſuch a manner as could not but be ſufficiently gratifying both to my vanity and affection. —Our deportment, indeed, was ſufficiently explicit not only to draw upon us the gentle and encouraging jokes of our parents and relations, but alſo to inform every one who knew us pretty accurately of the ſituation of our hearts: ſo that the whole neighbourhood was full of the intended nuptials of young Belmour and his Sophia, long before we had ever mentioned the ſubject of affection in any other point of view than as a topic of natural converſation, among ſuch young people as are in the habit of comparing their ſentiments.

"One day, however, as we were walking together through one of the ſequeſter'd ſcenes that abound in the neighbourhood of Oakland, and converſing, as was our practice, with all the unbounded confidence

of conſcious innocence——Oh! I ſhall never forget that day!—The meridian ſun caſt an imperfect ray through the ſhady roof of oaks and ſycamores, and the whiſpering of the zephyrs through the ruſtling foliage conſpired with the ſoft trill of the woodlark, and plaintive murmurs of the ſtock-dove, to awaken the tendereſt emotions of our hearts.—Here it was that, ſeating ourſelves on the moſſy fragment of a once flouriſhing oak, we breathed, with blended hands and uplifted eyes, the firſt vows of mutual love and conſtancy; for cold hypocriſy was a ſtranger to the boſom of my Sophia, and ſhe returned with mutual ſincerity the acknowledgments of a paſſion which ſhe mutually felt.

"From what I have already ſaid you will conclude that my father was not unacquainted with our attachment. Nay, it was frequently a ſubject both of jocular and more ſerious alluſion between him and Mr. Sedley, whenever the two families were together; and as neither of them

ever

ever gave the ſmalleſt diſcouragement to our mutual partiality, we looked upon our felicity as ſecure. For, indeed, what could we have to doubt.—Mr. Sedley was not a man to look forward to any thing but the happineſs of his child, and my father could not but conſider it as an advantageous match for me, who am but a younger ſon.

"But accurſed Fortune blaſted all my expectations by her unſolicited favours! and that baneful accumulation for which others ſigh, has blaſted the peace of Belmour for ever!"—

THE WANDERER.—TRAITS OF PARENTAL TYRANNY.

"ONE fatal evening," continued the unfortunate lover—"juſt after Mr. Sedley and my Sophia had left us,—for the two families, as was frequently their practice, had

ſpent the whole day together—and my Sophia and myſelf—Oh! hours of tenderneſs ever to be regretted!—had been expatiating without reſtraint on our proſpects of approaching felicity.—Juſt as they had departed, my father called me into his room, and, without any kind of preparation, informed me that I muſt ſet off the next morning at five o'clock for the Hebrides.—*For the Hebrides, Sir,* ſaid I—— thrilled with apprehenſion.—*But why ſo haſtily, Sir?—May I not—*" *Look ye,*" ſaid he, with that blunt and myſterious ſeverity with which he always kept the minds of his children in ſlaviſh terror—" *Don't why and wherefore me. Do as I bid you. Be off before five to-morrow morning; and carry this letter to your couſin Dawſon. I ſhall be with you in a fortnight.*"

" Remonſtrance I knew would be vain.—I retired to my apartment, and having conſumed the night, partly in writing to my Sophia, and partly in dreadful apprehenſions, and vague conjectures on the object

object of this myſterious journey, I ſet off in the morning, leaving my letter in the hands of the ſervant, with the ſtricteſt injunctions to deliver it without delay: for I dreaded leſt the news of my departure ſhould reach her from ſome leſs ſoothing meſſenger: I knew it would pierce her to the very ſoul: and reflection drove me almoſt to deſtraction.

"My reception in the north was almoſt as myſterious as my journey; and I could not but be ſurpriſed that my couſin ſhould neither voluntarily offer, nor be induced by my enquiries, to unfold any buſineſs contained in the letter; or to drop any thing that might account for the ſuddenneſs of my journey. But I afterwards found that the letter contained only particular inſtructions to intercept all letters to and from me: which I dare ſay was too faithfully performed; for I never received any anſwer from Miſs Sedley to the letter which I left behind me, and as I always truſted the ſervant to put mine into

the poſt, I conclude that ſhe never received any more from me.—In the mean time mandate after mandate came from my father, ordering me to remain where I was: every one containing a promiſe that he would be with me in a few days, or a fortnight.—But I will not torment you with the agitation of my ſuſpenſe. At the end of three months, worn out of all patience, and diſtracted at not hearing from Miſs Sedley, I had my horſe ſaddled, under pretence of taking a morning ride, and ſet off for the village where I had left all that my ſoul held dear.

"I had arrived pretty near to the place of my wiſhes, when, as I was riding nimbly along, abſorped in all the agitation of painful reflection—the anguiſh of affection, and the horrors of diſobedience,—the bridle of my horſe was ſuddenly ſeized. Without obſerving who it was that thus impeded my paſſage, and ſuppoſing it to be a robber, I lifted up the butt end of the whip, and was preparing to knock him down.

down. But the well known harſhneſs of my father's voice arreſted my arm, and rivetted me in motionleſs deſpair. In the torrent of his rage he loaded me with anathemas and reproaches; and then turning round my horſe, rode with me directly back, with all the expedition that was poſſible; without uttering to me another word, either upon the road as we travelled, or at the houſes where we occaſionally alighted. Shortly after our arrival, however, he called me to him, and in a peremptory tone told me, that as the death of a diſtant relation, of which he had heard the day on which he reſolved upon my departure, had occaſioned a very unexpected and ample addition to his fortune, and as he now ſhould be able to make me a freeholder of four thouſand a year, I muſt not think of a poor low creature, who could ſcarcely have the expectation of as many hundreds. I was thunderſtruck at this. But he did not pauſe here. He inſiſted on my going to Cumberland, and marrying a niece of the perſon who

had left him the fortune, and who had an adjoining eſtate almoſt equally extenſive, with that which it was his intention to ſettle upon me.

"It was in vain that I repreſented my engagements to Miſs Sedley—in vain that I expatiated on her acknowledged fondneſs and ſtrongly atteſted attachment. He anſwered that I muſt either marry as he commanded, or my brother ſhould have every acre of his eſtate.—*Let him take them then, Sir,* exclaimed I, with unwonted boldneſs—*and with them my ſincereſt bleſſing. For though contempt and beggary ſhould go with me to my grave, I am determined to marry Miſs Sedley.*—"*And my eternal curſes,*" ſaid he, with the cooleſt ſeverity of immoveable reſolution—"*attend upon you, and plague you, if you do.—Nay, if ever you ſee her,—or even write to her again.*"—So ſaying, he took himſelf, with a ſtern and unagitated countenance, out of the room; and left me to brood upon his unnatural malediction. The ſtern ſeverity of my education

education—the ſlaviſh awe of parental authority which had been inculcated from my infancy, now ſhook me with the wildeſt terror. But a recollection of the faith I had plighted to my Sophia, and the unbounded confidence with which it had been returned, determined me (though I dared not, by marrying her, incur the malediction of my father) yet never to marry another.

"This reſolution was ſcarcely taken, when I received a letter from my father, incloſing ſome bank bills, ſufficient for the expences of my journey and intended nuptials, and ordering me never to ſee him again till Miſs Waterford had become my wife.—The die was caſt: and I never ſaw him more. I roved about diſtracted, from place to place, till reaſon was almoſt flown. I dared not meet the eye of Miſs Sedley, becauſe of the curſe of my father, nor return to my father without meriting the curſe of heaven for my treachery towards Miſs Sedley.

"At

"At length, after near a twelve-month ſpent in this manner, through mere deſpair I reſolved to go to ſea. I repaired to a friend, who had always been, with yourſelf, the joint confidant of all my hopes and cares; but whom (during the time of my diſtraction) I had never been near. I told to him my reſolution; and, after I had rejected with abhorrence his advice to ſee the object of my wiſhes, he commended my reſolution, and gave me letters of recommendation to ſome perſons in America; who, together with ſome connections I had there myſelf, might aſſiſt me in making ſome ſort of eſtabliſhment, if my mind ſhould become compoſed enough to wiſh one.

"I took my paſſage accordingly. But the night before the ſhip was finally to quit the Engliſh coaſt, as I was walking along the ſea ſhore, thinking of abſent joys, and invoking the name of my "little Sophia!" for ſo, in the hours of paſtime and endearment, I had always called her.

her, my ſoul became all of a ſudden poſſeſſed with wild and deſperate phantaſies. The mournful luſtre of the moon, trembling on the boundleſs waves, and ſilvering over the heaving ſurge that frothed againſt the ſands; the ſullen ſtillneſs of the night, the hoarſe murmurs of the ſea, the diſmal roar of the bell, which tolled forth the proclamation of death in the adjacent ſteeple, all conſpired to awaken the thought of ſelf-deſtruction:—ſelf-redemption, call it rather:—that only reſource of miſeries that admit no cure!—It was but a leap: one little effort of painful reſolution, and every pang was ended.—I ſtood for a while, hovering in preparation on the brink, and quelling with reaſon's better influence the laſt revolting doubt of inſtinctive prejudice; then turned, and bade the gloomy world farewell!—And now I was juſt hanging forward, and preparing to take the fatal leap, when a feeble, anxious voice, whoſe very ſound beſpoke my reverence, ſhriek'd out to me to forbear.

THE

THE WANDERER.—A SINGULAR PHENOMENON.

"I TURNED immediately round, and beheld a venerable form approaching haſtily towards me, whoſe long, looſe, antiquated garment of white cloth, whoſe uncovered head, diſplaying the poliſhed and almoſt hairleſs ſimplicity of his elevated forehead, whoſe ſilver beard, flowing in reverend majeſty down his breaſt, whoſe tall commanding figure, whoſe benevolent countenance, and whole myſterious appearance and deportment, floating, as it were, in the moonlight miſts that hovered upon the rocking margin of the ocean, impreſſed my diſtempered imagination with the idea not of an inhabitant of this world, but of one of thoſe benevolent agents from a better ſphere, whom poets and viſionaries have ſo often depictured as viſiting

viſiting with kind interference the ſorrows and perplexities of man.

" Before ſuch a phantom (for ſo I could not but conſider the preſent unwonted appearance) you will not wonder that I ſhould be bowed with ſilent reverence; that I ſhould liſten with ſubmiſſion to his admonitions; and obey with implicit awe the mandate that directed me to follow him. Nor did his comparative alertneſs and activity, as he walked along, ſo little correſpondent with the venerable appearances of age marked upon his wrinkled forehead, a little tend to ſtrengthen the impreſſion of ſupernatural agency, which his firſt appearance had produced. In ſhort, ſuperſtition immediately ſucceeded to the ſcepticiſm which, in the hours of melancholy reflection, had imperceptibly infuſed itſelf into all my ſerious opinions; and as I ſilently purſued his long majeſtic ſtrides along the foam-waſhed ſands, I expected every moment to be ſuddenly dived into ſome unſeen cavern, where I

was

was to be confined and puniſhed for my unhallowed murmurs, or ſnatched in angry whirlwinds from the beach, and ſhewed the aweful myſteries of the region into which I was preparing to force myſelf an unbidden gueſt.—Idle ſuggeſtions of diſtempered Fancy! whoſe vague conjectures, ever in oppoſition to Reaſon and Experience, ſnatch with impatient frenzy at every unuſual impreſſion of Imagination to diſplace the fair ideas of Truth and Conviction, and ſubſtitute in their place the wild dreams of ignorant Abſurdity. In this awful ſilence my venerable guide at laſt conducted me through a ſpacious pleaſure ground that borders upon the coaſt, and thence, to my no ſmall ſurpriſe, into a majeſtic Gothic building; in a ſmall retired room belonging to which he immediately ſeated himſelf, without any other ceremony than bidding me do the ſame. Still, however, my ſuperſtitious impreſſions were not done away: for the ſtraw lining and pictured ceiling of the apartment; the few pieces of antique and fantaſtic furniture ſcattered,

rather

rather than arranged about it; the lamp burning in one corner, the little caſement, fringed with ivy, that imperfectly admitted the feeble luſtre of the moon, with now and then a diſtant glance of the ſpangled ſurface of the ſea, daſhing with broken murmurs on the ear—in ſhort, every thing I beheld bore as little reſemblance to the things of this world and century, as though the controlling power of magic had reſtored the honoured dead and boaſted ages of the moſt remote antiquity. Nor could the impreſſion of myſtery be otherwiſe than encreaſed, when an emaciated dimunitive figure preſently making his appearance, ſeemed to take his inſtructions in ſigns, which I could not in the ſmalleſt degree comprehend, and diſappeared again without uttering a word. The meaning of this was however preſently unravelled—for ſhortly the ſame ſhadowy form returned, and having laid a cloth, and ſet a handſome cold collation before me, he next brought to my myſterious hoſt a reeking meſs, (whoſe appearance immediately

ately reminded me of the black broth of the Spartans) which having depoſited on a little ſtool,—or rather board, fixed on an unhewn ſtump before the window ſeat, he retired with the ſame unviolated ſilence as before: and my hoſt, having bad me welcome to my ſupper, ſet himſelf down, without further ceremony, to his own."

To the generality of my readers I am aware that this part of poor Belmour's ſtory will appear like an improbable fiction; and many will perhaps ſuppoſe that I am about to lead them into all the phantaſtic regions of incantation and romance: but they whom curioſity may have induced to take up their occaſional reſidence on the eaſtern coaſt of Kent, will immediately perceive, as I did, that this myſterious phantom could be no other than the eccentric Mr. R———, whoſe ſingularities and benevolence have alike conſpired to make him the wonder of the ſurrounding country.

country. This gentleman has ſomething ſo remarkable in his appearance and deportment, that though ſtill living I ſhall venture to treſpaſs ſo far on the received maxims of decorum as to dwell a little upon his character and ſingularities: and I am the more emboldened ſo to do, ſince (whatever may be the opinions of the dull ſons of Uniformity, who know no ſoul but cuſtom, no reaſon but vulgar opinion, and no bias but that derived from faſhion and outward formality) I am not at all aware that there is any thing in any of the circumſtances that might be related of him, that would do any real diſcredit either to his heart or his underſtanding. For as to the charge of eccentricity—who that but obſerves the ſelfiſhneſs, the abſurdity, the miſerable ſervitude to forms, to appearances, and the tyranny of cuſtoms (whoſe folly we all acknowledge as ſoon as the gloſs of novelty is worn away) by which the world at large is governed and controlled, would be aſhamed of flying off from the attraction of ſuch a center; and moving

moving (comet-like) in defiance of the pointing finger of Ignorance, in a courſe leſs obvious, it is true, to vulgar obſervation, though perhaps, in reality, in as regular, as well as a more extenſive orbit. In ſhort, though it muſt be granted that ſingularity may in ſome things be uſeleſs, and, to thoſe who are dependant on the caprices of the world, even in ſome inſtances injurious, yet it muſt alſo be admitted, that the only teſt of rectitude and propriety muſt at laſt be looked for within; and that no man of enlarged and generous feelings ever ſyſtematically adhered to the dictates of his *reaſon*, without encountering the clamour of the MOB—"*both the* GREAT *vulgar and the* SMALL"—of which the *former* are generally, perhaps, the more cenſorious and ridiculous.—But this is, peradventure, a ſentiment too wild for the trading formality of proſe; and ought to have been delivered over to the more licentious decoration of the Lyric Muſe.

But

But to return to the ſingular object of this digreſſion. His dreſs and appearance have already been ſufficiently deſcribed by Belmour; but as for himſelf, it is by no means an eaſy matter to give an adequate deſcription either of his eccentricities or his benevolence: of this latter however ſome idea may be formed from the circumſtance of his frequently diſguiſing himſelf in the habit of a peaſant, and going (though upwards of eighty years of age,) to toil and labour in the field, with people of that deſcription (to whom he is an excellent patron and benefactor) that he may the more fully be acquainted with the nature of their wants and misfortunes. His friendly attentions and diſpoſition to oblige are carried to the moſt romantic exceſs; nor is his generoſity in theſe reſpects (like that of the generality of mankind) confined to perſons of his own rank and condition; on the contrary, extending this diſpoſition even to a foible, he frequently ſuffers himſelf to be intruded upon by requiſitions, which the parties themſelves ought to

conſider

conſider it indecent to prefer.—Once in particular, it is reported, while he was entertaining a party of his friends, a butcher in the neighbourhood, on whom he had conferred repeated favours, came to requeſt the loan of one of his horſes to carry a load to a neighbouring fair. *Let him take it, to be ſure,* ſaid he: without a moment's conſideration: as though the ſervant had done wrong even to delay while he aſked the queſtion: and when he was interrogated by a friend whether he lent his horſes for ſuch purpoſes—" To be ſure," ſaid he; " and it is lucky he did not aſk me to go alſo; for how could I have refuſed, if I could have done the poor fellow any ſervice?"

Equally liberal in his ſentiments as he is generous in his deportment, and a friend both to mental and political liberty, this ſingular man triumphs over all the prejudices of ſuperſtition, and aſtoniſhes every one with whom he converſes, by the boldneſs with which he enters into every inveſtigation,

veſtigation, whether of a political, a theological, or an ethical nature, and ſhews himſelf as ſuperior in his modes of thinking, as in his deportment, to all the fooliſh trammels with which Faſhion, Prejudice, and the timid reverence of antiquity, conſpire to fetter and contaminate the vulgar mind. Conſcious of a natural impetuoſity of temper, he wiſely abſtains from the inflammatory juice of the grape, nor does he even ſuffer malt liquor to approach his lips. His food is chiefly meat, which he moiſtens with nothing but water; and his lighter repaſts are alternately of cocoa, coffee, burnt peaſe, and broth. In the room he ſleeps in, is a large window, facing the riſing ſun, that the ſplendour of that glorious phenomenon may ſalute him in the morning, and induce him to early riſing; there is alſo another window frame, without glaſs, and a venetian blind, that he may enjoy, in Summer and in Winter, that conſtant circulation of freſh air, of which many are ſo ridiculouſly afraid, but which is, perhaps, one of the beſt preſer-

vatives of health, and ſafeſt ſeaſoners of the conſtitution, which poſſibly can be appealed to or conceived. With all this ſingularity he joins the moſt noble politeneſs and affability, both of manners and deportment; and, notwithſtanding the ſmile of ignorance, and the pert jocularity of pretended wit, that may ſometimes be excited by his beard, his naked forehead, or occaſional cap of fur, his antique faſhioned garments, and, in ſhort, his whole unuſual appearance, I could not but reflect, whenever I had the good fortune to meet him, that there was a majeſty and ſimplicity ſtamped altogether upon his air and deportment, for the abſence of which all the pride and elegance of faſhion can but very imperfectly atone.

Such was the character, as he was walking, according to his frequent practice along the ſea ſhore, and admiring the ſolemn phenomena of nature, with whom the deſperate Belmour had the good fortune to encounter; and to whom, awed by his benevolent

benevolent and ſingular deportment, he was induced to unfold with freedom the whole of his melancholy ſtory.

THE WANDERER.—ESTIMATES OF DUTY.

"HE heard me, continued Belmour, with the moſt ſolemn attention; and after a momentary ſilence, and two or three fervent ejaculations againſt the various ſyſtems of deſpotiſm under which it is the misfortune of the race of man to be oppreſſed, "My ſon," ſaid he, "you ſeem to have carried your parental reverence too far, and not duly to have conſidered, that when thoſe whom nature, or the inſtitutions of ſociety, have placed above us, preſume to puſh their authority beyond the boundaries which the dictates of nature have preſcribed, it may even be criminal to obey.

In the *ſocial* and *relative*, as well as the *political* circle, the power and dominion is always to be held, and to be exerciſed, not for the benefit of the *governors*, but of the *governed*; and parents, like monarchs, when they preſume to oppoſe themſelves againſt the evident happineſs of thoſe, from whom they exact obedience, are to be conſidered only as tyrants and uſurpers, whom it is the firſt of duties to reſiſt, and depoſe from their unnatural and pernicious dominion. From the relative tyrant, indeed, it is to be expected, that we extricate ourſelves with all the mildneſs in our power; becauſe there is always a weight of obligation and kindneſs, which it muſt be cruel indeed to re-pay with the bitter harſhneſs of ill humour. But no one is bound to ſacrifice his happineſs to the caprice of another; and though, during the childiſh years of ignorance and indiſcretion, obedience is *expedient*, as the only preſervative againſt injury and misfortune, yet gratitude and affection are the ſole *duties* of the child; and Reaſon and Nature alone have

any

any primitive title to command over a reflecting being. But if to an irrational mandate, we are not called upon by any moral principle for implicit obedience, how much leſs are we to conſider ourſelves as obligated to immolate our voluntary engagements, the duties, the obligations, which we have of our own free will contracted, on the altar of this parental ſuperſtition? —how much leſs could you *even be juſtified* in ſacrificing the peace, the honour of the tender fair one, who had yielded you all her heart in generous confidence, to the capricious rage of a father, who has violated every implied condition of the relative compact, every bond of natural union and affection? But your father, it ſeems, had denounced his *curſes* upon your head, if ever again you ſhould ſee the object of your affections.—O! tyrant Superſtition! how doſt thou trample on the neck of abject Reaſon! Canſt thou believe that a benevolent Creator, even though he ſhould govern the univerſe by particular, and not by general laws, would viſit his creatures

with the idle maledictions which brutiſh Pride, or cauſeleſs Malevolence, may capriciouſly denounce? Has not, on the contrary, the heavieſt curſe—the curſe of an unquiet mind, of an unſatisfied conſcience, been the conſtant conſequence of that groundleſs apprehenſion, and of the weak and unmanly cowardice with which you thus ſuffered yourſelf to be driven from one to whom every tie of gratitude, of juſtice, and voluntarily contracted duty, ought to have rivetted you for ever?—Go, go, my ſon, return to the injured object of your affections—learn to laugh, as heaven will laugh, at curſes which you have not merited; and entertain a juſter idea of the Divinity, than to ſuppoſe that his wrath can be provoked by following the dictates of nature, or his anger averted by perjury and injuſtice."

"His arguments to this effect, though the prejudices of my education at firſt revolted againſt them, were at laſt triumphant. My deſpair ſubſided; and having embraced

embraced the offer of his hoſpitality for the night, I determined to think no more of America; but to ſet off the enſuing morning for the village of Oakland, in queſt of my dear Sophia. But the convictions of reaſon came too late; and the only effect of my repentance was to inflame my ſorrows. She was gone from the once cheerful habitation, where I had ſo often enjoyed the tender felicity of her ſociety: and where ſhe had taken her reſidence, there was no one could ſuggeſt to me the moſt faint conjecture. Wherever I went to enquire, I could hear nothing but tales that wracked my ſoul, of the melancholy deſpondency into which ſhe fell, from the time of my departure, and the misfortunes of Mr. Sedley, which had brought his family to ruin, and himſelf to an early grave: but upon the important object of my enquiry, there was no one could give me the ſlighteſt information. From that time to this the whole of my attention has been engroſſed by a wild and hopeleſs purſuit: excepting only the

intervals which have been engroſſed by the laſſitudes of deſpair. From town to town, and from village to village, I have wandered in fruitleſs enquiry, till every expedient of hope has failed me, and deſpair and miſery have left me but one reſource.—It is, however, a ſure one" (concluded he, with a wild look, and an emphatic tone of voice) " and the deluſions of this deteſted world ſhall cheat and torment me no more."

HINTS FOR THE STOICS.

SUCH was the ſtory of the unhappy Belmour, and ſuch the gloomy ſentence with which it concluded; yet, notwithſtanding the awful reſolution which this concluſion ſuggeſted, I could not but flatter myſelf, that his mind was ſomewhat relieved by the narrative. If there is any thing

thing can ſoften the obduracy of deſpair, and attach the breaking heart again to life, it is certainly the tender confidence of free communication; than which nothing is ſo great a relief to the burthened mind, and in ſome caſes, perhaps, even to the diſtempered fancy.

We had not walked far before my opinion ſeemed to be conſiderably ſtrengthened; for Belmour (in whom the ſocial feelings had always glowed with an ardent generoſity—and who wanted, perhaps, nothing but a proper provocative to rouſe them again into action) after ſighing, with repeated emotion, ſtopped ſuddenly ſhort, and looking ſteadily and ſorrowfully in my countenance, burſt into tears; as though his friendſhip had revived in all its warmth, and he had diſcovered that there was yet a ſeparation to be endured—an attachment to be broken through, in his paſſage to the gloomy oblivion of the grave. I was pierced by this proof of tenderneſs to the very heart. I wept as

copiouſly, and, I verily believe, as bitterly as he did—and the pang I feel within my ſwelling breaſt, even now that I am relating the circumſtance, would perſuade me that memory and reflection are ſomething more than impaſſive vacancy—or immaterial ſuggeſtion:—that they dwell in the vital eſſence of the blood, and are modifications of that ſuſceptible organization, without which the breath that gives us life were nothing. Ambulator, though his nerves have a tone of ſomewhat firmer dignity than I could ever pretend to, could not avoid ſympathiſing in our tears; and the *philoſopher*, if Cynics and Stoics alone are to be dignified with the title, might have indulged, in full latitude, the triumph of his ſuperior wiſdom over a ſcene of effeminacy, where the form, perhaps, he would have ſaid, of manhood was all that remained among us. I am, for my own part, however, of a different opinion I cannot ſee why the fineſt ſuſceptibilities of nature ſhould be conſidered as unworthy of thoſe who boaſt the higheſt order

order of natural intellect—or why *Reaſon*, which is only the aggregate of ſenſation, collected and exhibited in one lucid focus, ſhould think ſhe ſhews her own ſtrength and dignity by degrading the feelings, without which ſhe never could have exiſted, or by ſtifling them when they preſume to riſe. For my own part, at leaſt, I have always adopted a very oppoſite ſet of maxims—the tear ever prompt, in my infancy, to ſtart at every tale of real, or fictitious woe, is not yet dried up; nor can I recollect that the feelings I have thus fondly cheriſhed, have ever betrayed me into half as many actions or ſituations unworthy of the manly pride of reaſon, as the maxims of cold-blooded apathy would evidently have led to.

But to return.—As ſoon as the firſt emotions of paſſion had ſubſided, I began immediately to take advantage of the tenderneſs which had ſucceeded to the ſullen

melancholy of my unhappy friend. I endeavoured to conſole him with the proſpect that his Sophia might yet be diſcovered, and to offer that, if he would but accompany me back to London, after we had finiſhed our preſent excurſion, I would travel with him as often as he pleaſed, in every poſſible direction, and endeavour to explore the ſecret retreat where the object of his affections was concealed; and I ſeemed, at laſt, even in ſome degree to have ſucceeded in perſuading him that we need not abſolutely deſpair of ſucceſs.—This circumſtance of his emotion was, indeed, one of thoſe fortunate opportunities I had all along been wiſhing for, to endeavour the revival of his hopes; nor could a more critical occaſion have been well preſented. I ſeized upon it, therefore, with avidity: conſcious that though the mind of Belmour was conſiderably deranged, yet that it was a derangement of that ſort in which judicious attention might adminiſter much relief: as, indeed, I believe it might in the generality of thoſe caſes of mental

inſanity, which are now reſigned to hopeleſs confinement and coercion. The cures, it is true, in this diſeaſe are proportionately few: but this I believe ariſes leſs from the real impracticability of relief, than from the improper point of view in which the malady has generally been conſidered: and eſpecially from not properly diſtinguiſhing between thoſe inſtances where it has ariſen from diſeaſes and accidents, merely corporeal, and thoſe where it has been the effect of ſome particular bias or purſuit of the mind.—In ſhort, of all the maladies to which human nature is liable, there is none that appears ſo little to be underſtood. But this is not at all ſurpriſing: ſince it cannot be expected that we ſhould be much acquainted with the *diſtempers* and *derangements* of a *principle*, with whoſe very *nature* we are ſo imperfectly acquainted; and even whoſe *healthy operations* mock all the efforts of our art to trace. But though the reſearches of the anatomiſt cannot detect the fine organs of this moving principle: though our ſenſes cannot take

take cognizance of its *modes of operation*, yet we are often acquainted with *remote cauſes*, and familiar with *ultimate effects*: and if, where practical *dogmas* are attended with ſo little ſucceſs, we were to *reaſon* from the analogies within our reach (to compare the *inſane* with the *eccentric*, and the *eccentric* with the *orderly maſs*) we might, perhaps, from obſerving how the *paſſions* of mankind are generally to be managed, mount at length, by reflection, to the diſcovery of thoſe means by which perſons labouring under more *permanent derangements* (for every individual *paſſion* that ſwallows up, for the time, that *reaſon* which ought to compare and ballance between them *all*, is a *temporary* inſanity) are to be regulated, and frequently reſtored.—In fact, theſe are caſes leſs of medicine than of judgment: and I queſtion much, whether a keen obſerver of the paſſions of mankind, and the circumſtances by which thoſe paſſions are reſpectively worked upon, or allayed, would not be more uſeful to the generality of perſons labouring

labouring under this misfortune, than the whole College of Phyſicians in conſultation.

ROCHESTER.—PICTURESQUE BEAUTIES.

THE converſation with poor Belmour, and the melancholy pauſes with which it had been occaſionally interrupted, brought us in ſight of Rocheſter; the ſpire of whoſe humble cathedral, and the ruined walls of whoſe venerable caſtle, as well as the pictureſque windings of the Medway, immediately challenged our attention.—Not that the bird's eye proſpects in this neighbourhood (on the London ſide at leaſt) have all the beauty and majeſty which its ſituation on the map would lead one to expect. The united maſs of Stroud, Rocheſter, Chatham, and Brompton, diſplay

play nothing but one diſguſting glare of red bricks and tiles, thrown together without order or magnificence; and the wearying inſipidity of which not even the ſteep precipice upon which the houſes of the laſt of theſe places are ſo formidably hung, can enliven or relieve. Nay, even the Medway herſelf, whoſe rapid waves afford conſiderable animation to the landſcape, loſes much of her beauty by the ſwamps, or patches of grey marſh, that occaſionally project into her ſtream, or deform her margin. In ſhort, ſhe is rather a troubled than a magnificent ſtream: her ſilver ſurface is not contraſted by the ſame rich emerald tints that adorn the ſwelling and luxuriant banks of her huſband, Thames; neither does ſhe diſplay, as ſhe widens, the ſame majeſtic ſwell, nor the ſame lucid tranquility, as ſhe contracts her varied wave. Even the rapidity of her ſtream is leſs to be accounted for from any copious accumulation of water than from the ſudden expanſion, which a little below the bridge, rather deforms than aggrandizes her courſe.

Theſe

Theſe criticiſms, however, muſt not be preſſed too far.—It is my intention to contraſt the comparative beauties of the Thames and the Medway; not to deny to the latter all title to admiration. On its banks from the Rocheſter ſide, advancing towards its ſource, are ſome delightful walks, and the whole extent of the harborous lane, from thence to Boſtell, is not to be equalled for ſylvan beauty by any thing on the banks of the rival river. All the way from the very caſtle, the path is along the verdant ſlope of a finely wooded hill, with a charming declivity of paſturage, bounded by the ruſhing ſtream to the right, and on the left a pleaſing ſhade of venerable oaks and beeches, partly ſheltering ſome conſiderable manſions that ſkirt the city. By this path you are immediately conducted to the pictureſque church yard of St. Margaret's, which has all the charms that could poſſibly be deſired in a place of ſuch *permanent reſidence*. If you look behind, you have the moſt pictureſque view of the caſtle, the bridge,

and

and a proportion of the town; and a diſtant proſpect of hills, paſtures, grazing flocks, ruſtic ſpires, and windmills. If you look before you, you have a long ſhadowy lane, whoſe very ſight mitigates the noontide fervour; and below you is ſtretched the ſinuous courſe of the river, bounded by the blue diſtant mountains, from which it ſeems to iſſue. The Gothic ſimplicity of the church itſelf is finely emboſomed in venerable trees, and the tower is as finely decorated with ivy as any one I ever remember to have beheld (thoſe of South Mims and Erith alone excepted.) In ſhort, I never ſaw the church yard in my life, I ſhould ſo much wiſh my ghoſt to take a ramble in, as St. Margaret's:—only the curſe of it is, that it muſt never be permitted to take its airing but in the dark gloom of midnight. The remainder of the way lies through the lane I have already alluded to; and never was a ſummer's walk more delightfully ſhaded: the acclivity to the left being richly overhung with young ſaplings and underwoods, with now and

then

then an old antic twiſted oak, writhing acroſs, and flinging his fantaſtic branches aloft with pictureſque diverſity; the edge of the precipice alſo to the right, is irregularly guarded by the ſame luxuriant fringe of copſe and foliage: ſometimes entirely excluding, ſometimes imperfectly revealing the courſe of the river; and ſometimes conducting the eye down the alternately abrupt and gradual ſlope of verdure, to the ſilver ſurface that reflects the gay diverſities of the horizon.

A noble ſcene alſo, of a very different deſcription is commanded from the rude chalky hills beyond Rocheſter, the towering ſummits of which reward the wearied traveller who aſcends them, with a more pictureſque view of the town and river beneath; a fine variety of vallies, hop grounds, and humble villages on one hand; and the windings and junction of the Thames and Medway on the other, together with the ſhips riding at anchor at the Nore. In ſhort, Rocheſter is by no means deſtitute

of

of that grand advantage of provincial over metropolitan cities: the opportunities I mean of enjoying a delightful ramble, without being obliged to toil through five or ſix miles of buſtle and diſguſt *to fetch it.*

ROCHESTER.—ANTIQUITIES.

BUT the objects that naturally attract the firſt attention of the ſtranger, are the cathedral, and the caſtle: or more properly ſpeaking, the lofty ſquare tower of Gundulph, which is the only part that ſtill remains tolerably entire, of this once majeſtic and important fortreſs. The former of theſe, it is true, muſt appear ſufficiently homely to the eye that has contemplated the venerable Abbey of St. Peter's, Weſtminſter, with its florid appendage, Henry VIIth's Chapel; the ſublime and lofty porch of

of Peterborough; or, above all, the majeſtic tower of Chriſt Church, Canterbury, its ſuperb ſkreen, its magnificent ſhrine of Thomas à Becket,

——" Its high embowed roof,
" With antic pillars, maſſy proof,
" And ſtoried windows, richly dight,
" Caſting a dim religious light;"—

but it is Gothic: and he muſt therefore be dead to one, at leaſt, of thoſe ſenſes from which my friend, Ambulator, and myſelf derive ſo conſiderable a proportion of our felicity, in whom this circumſtance alone would not inſpire ſome degree of curioſity and delight. Nor does Gundulph's tower itſelf (on account of the extreme ſimplicity of its ſtructure) preſent the traveller, at the firſt diſtant view, any thing like the pictureſque attractions which may be boaſted by the noble fragments of Dover, Cooling, Saltwood, and a variety of ruined Caſtles, with which this region of Antiquities (Kent) abounds in every direction. But as you approach, through the miſerable town of Stroud, to Rocheſter bridge,

bridge, the venerable ruins overhanging the oppoſite bank, together with the huge fragments already tumbled into the bed of the river, and liſting their rude ſides, like pointed rocks, above the rapid tide, fill the aweſtruck mind with pleaſing images: and the walk at the foot of this wave-waſhed monument of antiquity, which the firm bottom of the river admits, at every ebb of the tide, conducts the curious ſtranger, with an agreeable kind of terror, to the more picturesque ſide of the caſtle—whoſe huge, time-riven towers, partly ſheltered and partly overgrown with trees and foliage; and the garden walks, and harbours ſmiling beneath the tottering maſſes of diſjointed walls, full ſeven feet in thickneſs, mingle the terrible and the pleaſing, the beautiful and the ſublime, in one groteſque picture of ſylvan nature, of horticulture, and antiquities. To this groope of ſcenery in the caſtle yard, the entrance, from this pathway in the bed of the river, after aſcending a ſteep bank (a remnant of the deep foſs that formerly defended the caſtle) is

is by an arched gateway, through a fragment of a ſmaller tower, forming one of the angles of the fortification. This gateway brings you immediately under the lofty and venerable walls of the principal keep, erected, or at leaſt commenced, by Gundulph, biſhop of Rocheſter, in the time of William Rufus; and who was a very celebrated architect in thoſe times, as appears not only from this huge ſtructure, but alſo from his being concerned in the direction of the repairs and additions which, about the ſame period, were made to the Tower of London.

The angles of the tower I am now deſcribing, nearly correſpond with the cardinal points of the compaſs. It is about ſeventy feet ſquare at the baſe, but not quite ſo much at the ſummit, by reaſon of the ſlight inclination of the exterior ſurface of the walls; which are in general of about the conſiſtency of twelve feet. The floors, and all the interior parts of the building, are deſtroyed (for the ſake of the materials,)

materials,) except the paſſage about half way up, which, according to the old Gothic faſhion, encircles the whole building; out of the maſſive walls of which it is hollowed; and the ſtone ſtair caſes, which, according to cuſtom alſo, wind in ſpiral lines up two of the angles of this crumbling ruin. The ſteps, even of that which is ſtill conſidered as acceſſible, are almoſt entirely worn away; ſo that the rugged aſcent, and indeed the whole appearance of the building, is calculated to impreſs the minds of perſons, not uſed to ſcrambling among theſe fragments of barbarous magnificence, with no faint apprehenſions of danger—

And I who frequent, from my infant years,
Led on by *curious Fancy's* daring hand,
With "harebreadth ſcapes and dangers imminent,"
Have toy'd familiar——Who, in penſive mood,
Oft by the ruſhing torrent's crumbling bourn
High tottering, or deep eddie overhung
By writhing oak, or willow's weeping ſpray,—
Fit couch! fit canopy for brooding thought
At Evening's ſolemn hour!—on rocking wall,
Fragment of antique abbey, hall, or wreck
Of ivy veſted Caſtle,—or, ſublime,
On the cloud-propping cliff's tremendous brow,

Have

Have woo'd the awful dread that thrills the ſoul,
And wakes Imaginat'on's wildeſt dream,
Till the daz'd ſight turns fearful:—Even I
(Deſerting from my friends and guide to trace
The long neglected avenue, and mount
The ſtill more ſhatter'd ſteps, which even the foot
Of vent'rous Curioſity reſigns
To bats and owls, who ſoar on buoyant wing
To their high cradled young) though from my youth,
Familiar with ſuch ſcenes, ſhrink back appall'd,
As, near the ſummit, o'er looſe rugged ſtones
I gain the narrow undefended way,
Where, as I ſtride, perchance, the ſmalleſt ſlip,
Or giddy wandering of the timid brain,
Might headlong plunge me many a fathom down,
A breathleſs, mangled ſpectacle, no more
In worth and dignity than the poor rooks
Whoſe fate (thrown timeleſs from the lofty neſt)
Below I had deplored. Ah! wherefore, ſay,
Does Curioſity thus urge the ſtep
Such ſcenes of trembling horror to explore?—
Why—but that hence the peace-illumin'd ſcene,
Where calm Security reclines, may ſmile
With ſofter pleaſures, and enjoy the charm
Of dear viciſſitude?—Why—but that Heaven,
Intent to variegate, with bounteous care,
The copious ſources of myſterious joy,
For minds of a peculiar ſtamp reſerves
Some daring pleaſures—ſome peculiar zeſts
Of awe and high ſublimity, that muſt,
Ere with their genuine glow they throb the breaſt,
Be ſnatch'd from giant Danger's lowering brow?

THE CLIFFS.

OF theſe awful impreſſions I had a particular ſpecimen among the rude ſcenery in the neighbourhood of Folkſtone and Dover. For, being at no very conſiderable diſtance from the cliffs, I determined to viſit a ſpot which the ſublime genius of Shakeſpeare has ſo nobly embelliſhed; to ſee whether Nature, or Nature's poet, had the boldeſt hand at a pictureſque combination.

To the traveller acquainted with the Kentiſh coaſt, I need not deſcribe the variety of ſublime phenomena which a ſpace of fourteen or ſixteen miles here preſents us with.—He will remember, I dare ſay, with pleaſure, the heath-clad hill that begins, almoſt as ſoon as you paſs the pebbled

bled beach that ſeparate the pictureſque town of Hythe from the ocean, to ſwell one above the other, till thoſe hills become mountains, and thoſe mountains precipices;—the abrupt termination of this chain;—the neglected and ruined fortification of Sandgate, at the entrance of the narrow paſs between this and the contiguous range; and the pleaſant little village which, within theſe three or four years, has ſtarted up around it for the conveniency of bathing: for which its ſituation has certainly many recommendations, though till lately they have been entirely neglected.—It will one time or other, however, have its day, I make no doubt, when the preſent watering places of faſhionable reſort have nothing, perhaps, to boaſt of but mouldering monuments of what they once have been, and mementoes of the fickle caprices of taſte.—He will remember alſo the ſudden change of ſoil that here takes place,—the proud acclivity of ſtony rocks, ſometimes naked, and ſometimes cloathed with ſcanty herbage, or hung with weeds and

brambles, and wild flowering ſhrubs, the pools and picturesque hollows formed by the rude projections, and occaſional piles of humbler rocks beneath; and, in ſhort, the whole barren magnificence of coaſt between Sandgate and Folkſtone—

ODE to the CLIFFS, at SANDGATE.

STROPHE I.

Oh! how Remembrance feaſts with viſual joy,
As, by Imagination's friendly aid,
Again upon the rocking precipice
She ſtands ſublime!
Or o'er the rude-projecting ſtrata leans,
To ſcan, with timorous eye, the ragged ſteep,
And hear the murmuring of the ebbing ſurge
That moans along the beach!
O! how does Fancy ſhrink, as, once again,
With vent'rous ſtep, on the extended point
Of yonder ſhatter'd rock, that forward leans,
And ſeems to tremble in the thinner air,
Again ſhe treads—all iſolate,
And ſcarce connected to the living world;
And there, in awful meditation wrapp'd,
Beholds above, below, and all around,
One boundleſs ocean of ethereal dew,—
Save where the unſtable prominence to the cliff
Imperfect joins:
An iſthmus rude,

Which

Which the firſt ſhattering tempeſt rends away,
Enrag'd,—and hurls
In dread convulſion to the raging flood
That foams, and roars beneath.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Here, as I hover o'er the green abyſs,
Whoſe mountain billows ſcarce below appear
To ape the little ripples that adorn
The babbling ſtream,
With what bold freedom the excurſive eye
Plays o'er the glaſſy ſurface, and admires
The dancing ſun-beams, and the porpoiſe huge
That, rolling, ſports below!
Ye monſters of the flood! however rude,
To man's imperfect ſenſe, your ſavage forms!
Howe'er to us your elemental waves
Seem to ſhut out the finer extaſies
That the warm ſun ſhould meliorate,
And balmy gales fan into rapturous being,—
Ye have too your ſports, your joys peculiar,
Your loves, your paſtimes, in the gelid wave,
That check the Tyrant's impious ſophiſtry,
And prove the World he fondly deems his own
Was made for all:
Appropriate boons
To every tenant of the ſentient ſphere
To yield,---and make
To other, each, within his bounded range,
Impart alternate bliſs!

EPODE I.

O! how ſerene!
With what a mild effulgence o'er the deep
Bends the clear Heav'n!
While, borne by gentle breezes from the coaſt,
Alauda floats, and warbles as ſhe floats
On ruſſet wing ſecure:
Rock'd by the buoyant billows, far beneath,
The flocking ſea-fowl ſpread the oily wing,
Scarce from this height diſcernable;
And friendly zephyrs,
Slow, from yon diſtant point yet ſcarcely ſeen,
Waft the white ſail, that homeward proudly ſwells
To kiſs the wiſh'd-for ſhore.
Ah! may no bleak diſaſter ſudden riſe
To blaſt the ſeaman's hopes,
To ſteep in hopeleſs tears the virgin's eye,
Who now, expectant, from the ſtony beach
Views the ſlow bark, prophetic of its freight,
And William's faithful love.
Yet ſee!—the anxious eye,
Straining with eager rapture, dim deſcries
At yonder point,
Where, ſtooping to the wave, the Horizon faints,
And ſpreads the margin of her mantle grey
To cloſe the miſty proſpect,
The darkening cloud
Spread its long ſtreak upon the bounded wave,
That, lull'd, oblivious, by the opiate weight,
Gleams like a poliſh'd mirror.
Auſpicious gales the gloomy ſign avert!—
Is it, ye fiends of ſtorm,
Some gloomy tempeſt from the Ocean caves

Riſing

Riſing, ſublime, to cleave the rocking earth,
The ſmiling image of the world deform,
And mix the warring elements?
Or is it: ſay:
Some dark aerial vapour, cloſe condens'd,
To lock the impriſon'd thunder for awhile,
That ſoon, dread rattling up the azure vault,
Shall tear the beauteous concave as it flies,
The tower and foreſt monarch proſtrate lay,
Whelm the wreck'd veſſel in the treacherous wave,
Plunge the worn crew in endleſs night,
And blaſt each promis'd joy?

STROPHE II.

Ah, no! no miſts belch'd forth from Ocean caves,
Brooding the rocking Earthquake, ſwell to view;
Nor denſe aerial vapour's ſable folds
Shroud the dread ſtorm,
That ſoon with loud-deſtroying rage ſhall burſt,
Bid the blue concave flame with ſudden wrath,
And with mad vengeance rend the foreſt oak
And whelm the exulting bark!
But fair to view, as now the ſharpen'd ken
Pierces the hovering miſts, diſtinct appear
Thy cliffs and ſwelling ſhores, luxuriant France!
Whoſe luſcious fruitage for the ſpoiling hand
Of bold rapacious Tyranny
Had redden'd in the partial ſun too long:
That partial Sun who, on thy fertile hills
Still lingering, with prolific ray benign,
Mourn'd to behold an injur'd, trampled race,
Groan in the field, and labour at the preſs,

While, with fell gripe,
A ruffian crew,
With gaudy titles deck'd, the goblet ſeiz'd;
Drain'd off the luſcious draught, and left for them
The bitter dregs alone.

ANTISTROPHE II.

And Oh! that now no Woes of other hue
O'er the devoted country threat'ning frown'd,
And the well-meaning many left a prey
To Demagogues,
Who o'er the wrecks of public Virtue riſe,
And whet the dagger for compatriot ſtrife,
That on the common ſpoilers of the earth
Should ſpend its nobler rage;—
Should ſcourge the tyrants who with impious aim
Seek in the deſolated fields of France,
While there again the fallen fane they rear
Of Kingly fraud, new yokes and chains to forge
To bow the necks (well meriting!)
Of tame obſequious vaſſals, who at home
Laviſh their treaſures to promote the fame
Of theſe ungrateful pageants; falſe, and baſe!
---O France! O England! rouſe ye ere ye fall!
Let not thy upſtart tyrants, Gallia! balk
Thy great deſigns:
Nor Britain thou
Be lull'd in fatal lethargy, ſupine,
And wake---(too late!)
To curſe the galling yoke thy folly bought,
And clank thy chains in vain.

EPODE

EPODE II.

O! for an arm
Like Jove's tremendous in Tytanian war
To reach theſe crimes!
To vindicate fair Freedom's genuine rights,
And of their two-fold Tyrants rid Mankind:
This ſanguinary crew,
That with mad havock graſp at tranſient power,
And in wrong'd Liberty's polluted ſeat
Eſtabliſh factious Anarchy;
And theſe Oppreſſors---
Theſe proud deſtroyers of the abject World,—
That groans and toils, that they may feaſt, and ſlay,—
That with blind frenzy ſlights
Each kindred duty of the ſocial heart
To ſwell their fatal power,
To lift the puppet Idols to the ſkies,
With mimic lightnings arm their frantic hands,
With fulſome flattery fan their crimes, and feed
Their peſtilential pride!
O! ſtrike them, gracious Heav'n!
With thy avenging thunders check their crimes!
Let them, tranſfix'd,
With adamantine chains and fetters bound,
On the bleak ſummit of yon frowning rocks
Bewail their guilty fury!
Let them, ſo long
As the pent Ocean chafes the rocky bourns
Of theſe ſtorm-ſever'd realms, their guilt bewail;
Their fell, deſtroying fury
Of mad Ambition, and Anarchic rage!
Let them, avenging powers!
As glides the paſſing bark, oft ſhriek aloud,
And bid the ſhuddering mariners attend;

And to his native region each convey
The important admonition—
" O friends! no more,
" Deaf to the call of Patriot Virtue, ſeek
" A bloody harveſt from your Country's woes!
" O royal plunderers of the world! no more
" Plunge your deluded realms in ſavage war
" To check fair Freedom's courſe; but ſee in us
" The living monuments of ſacred wrath;
" And yield to Man his raviſh'd rights;
—" To Heav'n its worſhip'd ſway!"

The ſcene of theſe reflections, however, bears but little compariſon, in point of ſublimity, with that which begins to preſent itſelf when you have left the town of Folkſtone behind you. With the range of cliffs and mountains that now ſwell, with ſtill bolder magnificence, before you, the rude romantic grandeur of the great ſtile of compoſition (to ſpeak in the language of art) may truly be ſaid to commence; and though the remembrance of Alps and Pyrennes may compel the travelled admirer of the awful works of Nature to look, with diminiſhed dread and wonder, upon theſe rocks and precipices, yet thoſe who are only familiar with the tranquiliz-

ing

ing ſcenes of luxuriant beauty preſented by the ſmiling hillocks and fertile vallies around the metropolis, will not be at all inclined to wonder at the lofty flight which the muſe of Shakeſpeare took from the airy brow, and afterwards from the terrific baſe, of Dover cliffs.

——"How fearful
"And dizzy 'tis, to caſt one's eyes ſo low?
"The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,
"Shew ſcarce ſo groſs as beetles: halfway down
"Hangs one that gathers ſamphire; dreadful trade!
"Methinks he ſeems no bigger than his head:
"The fiſhermen, that walk upon the beach,
"Appear like mice; and yon tall anchoring bark
"Diminiſh'd to her cock; her cock a buoy
"Almoſt too ſmall for ſight: The murmuring ſurge,
"That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
"Cannot be heard ſo high.---I'll look no more;
"Leſt my brain turn, and the deficient ſight
"Topple down headlong."

This deſcription is certainly copiouſly magnificent; the various objects ſucceſſively particulariſed are well ſelected, both for pictureſque effect, and for inſpiring that dread and horror which it is evidently the deſign of Edgar to produce in the

deſperate mind of Gloceſter. The other part of the picture is not inferior, either in judgment, or ſublimity of imagery—

" Hadſt thou been ought but goſſamer, feathers, air,
" *So many fathoms down precipitating*,
" Thou hadſt ſhiver'd like an egg."——
" Ten maſts at each make not the altitude
" Which thou haſt perpendicularly fallen."——

Again,

" From the dread ſummit of this chalky bourn:
" Look up a height;--the ſhrill-gorg'd lark ſo far
" Cannot be ſeen or heard."

Among the innumerable excellences of this deſcription, nothing can ever exceed the ſkilful modulation of the numbers, by which the ſound is made to echo with ſuch perfect coincidence to the ſenſe.—And yet even this ſublime paſſage has not eſcaped the murderous barbariſm of the modern clippers and improvers of our immortal bard; one of whom, in his ſapient ſuſceptibility of ear, has thought fit to change the rumbling rapidity of *many fathoms down precipitating*, into the deliberate ſtatelineſs

ſtatelineſs of *many a fathom headlong tumbling down.*—" O, what a tumbling down indeed is here!"—as a modern critic very pointedly exclaims.

It is obvious to remark, that this ſublime deſcription is taken from that part of the cliffs neareſt to Dover, where the chalk hardens into perfect rock, ſometimes abſolutely perpendicular, and at others hanging with very conſiderable projection over the ſea, and diverſified only with rude and ſhapeleſs projections, and here and there a ſolitary tuft of wild thyme or ſamfire: but the whole range, from Folkſtone to this ſpot, preſents a continual change of phenomena to the lover of picturesque diverſities. At firſt you ſeem to have ſcarcely any thing but continued ſtrata of gravel; this, however, is preſently diverſified with irregular intermixtures of chalk, progreſſively encreaſing till the gravel entirely yields, and the chalk ſeems only to be interrupted by an occaſional admixture of flint; and this

again

again gives way, in its turn, to the firm white rock, which I have previouſly noticed. The aſcent is alſo equally diverſified with "nodding ſteeps," practicable acclivities, tempeſt-riven chaſms, rude projections, and gloomy excavations: while, ſtill further to heighten the pictureſque effect, the eye is occaſionally relieved by the daſhing of foaming waves round the rude, maſſive fragments, which time and tempeſts have hurled from the awful eminence to the ſtony beach below; the tufts of ragged elders and flowering brambles, that, ſo long as any admixture either of gravel or looſe chalk remain, continue to adorn the broken precipices; the rude, but ſometimes progreſſive, piles of mountain above mountain—or more properly of rock frowning over rock, which, at one part in particular, obtrude themſelves upon the view; with their winding pathways, and romantic midway vales and hollows, ſprinkled with cattle, or enlivened by rabbits, ſtarting from the fiſſures, and hurrying up the perpendicular paths that lead to their

their holes and burrows.—Theſe, and a thouſand pleaſing and awful objects, which neither the pen, nor the pencil, can adequately deſcribe, together with the foaming billows, or glaſſy ſurface (according to the point it is obſerved from) of the ſea beneath, challenge the curious attention both from above and from below; and I accordingly ſcrambled up and down above a dozen times: juſt as caprice ſuggeſted; or as ſome new grace ſeemed to preſent itſelf; or ſome effect, which I was deſirous of comparing from the different points of view. Nor was I a little ſurpriſed, in ſome of theſe clambering digreſſions, to diſcover the marks of horſes hoofs, where one would have imagined that no one, but an eccentric lover of the wild and pictureſque, would have adventured even upon foot—or rather, upon all fours:—for in theſe ſituations the *erect and ſtately Lord of the Creation*, may ſometimes be glad enough (without deſcending much from his perpendicular) to find himſelf endowed with the powers and privileges of the quadruped.

druped. But gain is as powerful a ſtimulus as curioſity; and the patriot ſmuggler, who ſcorns the idea of paying taxes, which have never had the neceſſary ſanction of his approbation, will ſometimes elude detection by a nocturnal gallop up theſe well known cliffs; while the virtuous officer of the Cuſtoms, not leſs anxiouſly intent upon the honours of a ſeizure—or the advantages of a compromiſe, will ſometimes follow, with equal heroiſm and rapidity, at his heels. It was in the midſt of this particular examination of theſe famous cliffs, that I found myſelf in the tremendous ſituation, of which the ſhattered ſummit of Gundulph's lofty tower reminded me. For being deſirous of obſerving from above the effect of a particular appearance in the rocks, which ſtruck me as uniting in an eminent degree the ſublime with the beautiful, from below, and having meaſured with my eye the difficulty of the aſcent, which, though great, did not appear inſurmountable, I began with as many hands and feet as

Nature

Nature had provided me, to ſcramble up—though frequently with no better hold than a ſpray of elder, or a fragile tuft of thyme. Contrary to my expectations the difficulty encreaſed with the encreaſing height, and when I had got above three fourths of the way up, I found that I had encountered a rude rocky projection, of tremendous magnitude, which it was totally impoſſible to ſurmount, unleſs my feet had poſſeſſed the *alacrity at adheſion* of a fly; and like that little inſect, I could have crawled along, with my back hanging directly downwards to the leſſened beach below. If the aſcent was totally impoſſible, the deſcent would have appeared equally impracticable, if choice and deliberation had been in my power. But down I knew I muſt come; and though whether the head or the heels were to arrive at the bottom firſt, it ſeemed impoſſible for any precaution to aſcertain, yet I determined, as coolly as poſſible, to ſet about the important experiment.

" Give

" Give me my boots!" ſaid Rabelais, when he was dying, " for I am going to take a great leap in the dark!"—and, alas! between poor Sylvanus and the ſame dark leap, there ſeemed to be but a *three inch bridge;* over which it was neceſſary for him occaſionally to trot, to canter, and to gallop, for a ſteady pace was no more at his command than the wings of the towering eagle.—Oh! for the days of chivalry and romance, thought I, when your griffins and your chariots of clouds, were always at the ſervice of the diſtreſſed hero; or a guardian genius or two buoyed him up in the hour of danger: like a pair of corks under the arm-pits of an unpractiſed ſwimmer. Notwithſtanding this levity, however, with which I patted my reſolution on the back, like the ſhuddering ſchool boy, in the church yard, " whiſtling aloud to keep his courage up," I was ſufficiently aware of the awful danger of my ſituation. The difference between aſcending a precipice with the aſſiſtance of the eyes, and deſcending without the

advantage

advantage of their direction, muſt be evident to all; and never had I experienced ſo much difficulty as in mounting to this giddy height: a conſiderable part of which I had abſolutely been ſtimulated to perſevere in attempting by the apparent impoſſibility of returning. A painful remembrance ſhot acroſs my mind of thoſe who, unconſcious of my danger, were looking forward, perhaps, to the expected pleaſure of my return. Nor could I help picturing to myſelf, for a moment, the grey heirs of a widowed parent hanging diſconſolate over an untimely grave, which the more touching ſorrows of my tender, my amiable little Stella, were watering with inceſſant tears. I did not, however, ſuffer myſelf to be ſo abſorped in theſe reflections as to be incapable of enjoying the ſcene preſented before me. On the contrary, though my heart beat an audible alarm at the proſpect below, I ſeated myſelf at this airy height, with all the calmneſs I was maſter of, beneath the hanging

precipice,

precipice, and contemplated the beautiful ſerenity of the ſpangled ſea; over whoſe glaſſy ſurface the ſcintillating rays of the ſun danced in gay twinkling chace: as though the ſtars of the firmament, courſing each other in antic paſtime, had left the azure region of the air, to bathe in the emerald wave. In ſhort, I amuſed alternately my eye and my fancy, with all the images which my ſituation could either preſent or ſuggeſt; reſolved that if I ſhould ever arrive in ſafety to the firm earth below me, at leaſt I would not have to reproach myſelf with having permitted the ſenſe of danger to balk me of any opportunity of, that which is always the grand object of all my rambles, enlarging the range of my ideas. Sometimes I realized to myſelf the melancholy ſituation of ſome ſhipwrecked mariner, who, in the midſt of the fatal tempeſt which ſwallowed up his hopes, ſets on the rugged brow of the iſolated rock, whoſe ſavage height preſerved him, and views the floating carcaſes of his companions toſſed upon the raging

ſurge

ſurge below. Again my ſituation reminded me of the fabled ſituation of Promethius, and the ſublime picture which Æſchylus has preſented of him, chained for ſucceſſive ages to his bleak rocks, and expoſed to groan forth his ſufferings amidſt the fierce Atlantic roar: and I even found myſelf at liberty to reflect, that perhaps this character, as delineated by the ancient poet, ſuggeſted to our own Milton the firſt idea of that portrait, which he has painted at large, with ſo much terrible ſublimity, in his infernal monarch—the chief of the fallen angels. I next turned a longing eye towards the diſtant cliffs of France; and could not but regret the impoſſibility of exchanging my preſent ſituation for the more honourable and ſcarcely ſuperior danger of defending, with the *ſword* of juſtice, the gallant ſtruggles of that brave people in the cauſe of their new-born Liberty. Almoſt any way of dying, however, (if it were not for the concomitant circumſtance of ſhortening the duration of life) is preferable to ſneaking under a

pair

pair of blankets in one's laſt moments, and waiting, like a poltroon, the ſlow and painful approaches of inglorious diſeaſe. Whether, however, this is to be my diſhonourable fate; whether I am reſerved for the more fatal perils of ſome future excurſion, in queſt of the ſublime and terrible of nature; or whether I am *deſtined* (as the goſſips term it) to the glory of periſhing by the *ſword*, or the *halter* of reſiſted Tyranny (either of which may be equally honourable in the eyes of thoſe who regard the motives, rather than the events of human action) is yet in the dark womb of Futurity. Certain it is, that Dover Cliff very kindly (for the preſent at leaſt) relinquiſhed the proffered honour of daſhing my brains out; and here I am, neither maimed nor giddy with my adventure. For applying, as my only reſource, to the briars and elders that thinly ſprinkled the ſide of the cliff, I contrived to let myſelf down, from precipice to precipice, till I arrived at laſt in ſafety on the beach, together with a fleck of chalk, and

and a ſprig of thyme, which I had gathered at the utmoſt height I had been able to attain.—Trophies purchaſed with more innocence at leaſt (and almoſt with as much, though not ſuch repeated, danger) than all the ſanguinary honours of the plunderers and deſtroyers of the world: the Alexanders and the Cæſars, the Edwards and the Henrys, by whom the peace of mankind has been ſo repeatedly diſturbed, and whoſe examples are ſtill ſo impiouſly held out for our applauſe and imitation.

Such was the adventure of the Cliffs at Dover—an adventure, I dare ſay, which few of my readers will envy me, and ſtill fewer be induced to imitate. Yet it is one of thoſe, perhaps, which will longer remain impreſſed upon my memory, and more frequently be recalled with pleaſure, than almoſt any of the eccentric ſituations in which it has been my fortune to be placed.

placed. It is not always the gayeſt proſpect—the moſt fortunate occurrence, or the hour of the moſt amuſive hillarity, that furniſhes us with the moſt permanent enjoyment. To Man, "who joy deſcries with forward and reverted eyes," the adventure at the time moſt unpromiſing, is frequently pregnant with the greateſt repetition of pleaſure and amuſing reflection. The ſcrapes and dangers, the diſappointments and diſaſters of the ſchool-boy often contribute to the enjoyment of the elbow chair; and loquacious age will ſometimes forget its infirmities, and the half extinguiſhed eye regain for awhile its animated luſtre, in recounting the ſcenes of danger and difficulty which youth and manhood have played their parts in; while the circumſtances of ſucceſs and proſperity are forgotten, with the maſs of diurnal occupations; and the purſuits of levity and pleaſure have paſſed away like the fleeting viſions of the night, which amuſed perhaps the fancy at the time they danced before it; but were never regarded by memory,

memory, as ſufficiently important to be treaſured in her recording volume. The fact is, the former claſſes of theſe impreſſions are more intereſting to the ſtronger paſſions, and ſtrike with more forcible colours the imagination, the moſt retentive, and the moſt durable of all the faculties of man: and ſuch is the conſtitution of humanity, that whatever may be the caſe with the firſt impreſſion, almoſt every thing that is retained in lively colours by the memory, if unaccompanied with any reproachful conſciouſneſs of guilt, is ſure, upon review, to afford us ſome degree of gratification. But the fact is, that this adventure was, upon the whole, far from being diſpleaſing at the time. It had indeed its anxieties, its ſhades of ideal grief, and its touches of terror, but the lively pleaſures of Imagination were predominant over the whole, and were perhaps heightened in no ſmall degree by the paſſions alternately excited; as the graceful action, the embelliſhments, the pictures of ancient manners, and the faſci-

nating beauties of poetical diction, in ſome well-wrought drama, acquire an additional charm from the mixture of the wilder and the ſofter paſſions, which are alternately inſpired by the ſituations and ſentiments of the Perſons.

ROCHESTER.—HISTORICAL RETROSPECTS.

BUT to return to Gundulph's tower; from whence it muſt be admitted I have digreſſed, at leaſt, with ſufficient freedom: eſpecially as the adventure, at the ſummit of this venerable piece of ruins, is itſelf a digreſſion, and properly belongs to an excurſion of more recent date than that which it is the buſineſs of this volume to bring to a concluſion: during which the preſence of Belmour, and the ſituation of his mind, prohibited us from indulging our curioſity with ſuch ſcenes of danger.

We

We ſatisfied ourſelves, therefore, with ſurveying the ruins of the fortification from below; tracing the curious hiſtory of its antiquity, its grandeur, and its decay; and moralizing on the ſcenes of public and private calamity, of domeſtic feuds, and depredations of foreign invaſion, which have been crowded on its eventful theatre.

Expoſed, from its ſituation, to the plundering fury of every invader, the ſpot upon which this caſtle is erected, has bowed alternately to the yoke of the Romans, (who had a ſtation here under the name of "Durobrovum," from the Britiſh name, "Dourbryf, *ſwift ſtream*," in alluſion to the rapidity of the Medway); of the Saxons (by whom it was called Hroffeceaſter, or Roffe's city, and who, a few years after the departure of the Romans, fought a deſperate battle in this neighbourhood againſt the unhappy Britons, whom theſe mercenaries had been called into the iſland to protect; and who again, under the reign of Ceadwalla, King of

Weſſex, taught the unfortunate city to feel the miſeries of war and rapine); of the Danes (who repeatedly ſpread pillage, maſſacre, and conflagration through its affrighted ſtreets); of the Normans (whoſe factious barons, and brutiſh ſucceſſion of uſurping tyrants, made it the frequent ſcene of their lawleſs violence and contentions, from the rapacious Rufus to the ſtupid John); and of the Dutch, whoſe Admiral Van Ghent, (in the fooliſh reign of that weak and licentious deſpot, Charles the IId.) with ſeventeen ſail, attacked Sheerneſs, which he took June 10th, 1667, blew up the fortifications, and burnt the ſtorehouſes, to the value of 40,000l.; then ſailed up the Medway, and finding every place but weakly provided for reſiſtance, burnt our men of war in the river, and in the docks; and, ſpreading terror and confuſion on every ſide, returned in unmoleſted triumph to his country: while the poor affrighted Londoners found that the *vigorous union* of their monarchic government had left them no better means of

ſecurity

ſecurity againſt a ſimilar viſit, than the expedient of ſinking, in heaps, their largeſt veſſels, in order to choak up the channel of the Thames.

Theſe, and a thouſand intereſting circumſtances, ruſh upon the mind of the hiſtorian, as he contemplates this eventful ſcene: upon which, having ſufficiently indulged our reflections, we turned to the neighbouring edifice, the cathedral; the principal objects of curioſity in which are ſome remains of ancient ſculpture, in the embelliſhments, and the fantaſtic diverſity of pillars and arches in the nave. The columns of the choir, and more recent parts of the building, and many of the mutilated monuments, are of marble, from the quarries near Petworth, in Suſſex. It is of a grey colour, with a caſt of green, thick ſet with ſhells, chiefly turbinated.—Several of theſe ſhells are filled with a white ſpar, which variegates and adds to the beauty of the ſtone. Its texture is rather irregular; but it is not deſtitute of

brightneſs. In many places, however, it is entirely obſcured by that ſtupid taſte for the ſpruce glare of whitewaſh, with which the modern decoraters of churches ſeem ſo uniformly infected. In the choir (which is entirely, except the altar piece and other modern ornaments, in the Saracen, or later Gothic ſtile) the pillars have eſcaped, or been redeemed, from this barbarous ſpruceneſs, and their grey cluſtered ſhafts contraſted with the white walls have a neat, and not unhandſome effect: Magnitude, however, is conſpicuouſly wanting to produce that ſublime impreſſion, which is the principal characteriſtic of the Gothic ſtile; and the *male* and *female* angel, ſinging, in the *varniſhed* grace of youth, at the altar, make but a poor compenſation for the abſence of the religious gloom of ſtoried windows.

Ever ſince the firſt introduction of Chriſtianity among our Saxon anceſtors, *St. Andrew* has had a Cathedral on this ſpot; but it was entirely rebuilt by *Gundulph*,

dulph, of whoſe edifice only a part of the nave appears at preſent to be ſtanding; and among the names of later improvers, we have *William de Hoo*, a ſachriſt and keeper of the holy things in this church, who, in 1227, rebuilt the choir; *Richard*, a monk and ſachriſt, who built the ſouth iſle of the choir; *Richard Eaſtgate*, a monk, who began, and *William of Axenham*, who finiſhed, the north iſle. Theſe names are no farther worthy of being recorded, than as they teach us to account for the irregular appearance of the generality of Gothic buildings, which, repaired or enlarged at different periods and by different architects, imbibed a motley caſt from the various taſtes which, at the different periods, were predominant.

THE HAMLET.

WHEN the caſtle and the cathedral have been examined, there remains nothing in

in Rocheſter worthy of a moment's obſervation; and we therefore haſtened through it as faſt as poſſible to our deſtined Inn (if ſo it may be called) at *Luton* (or the *low town*, I ſuppoſe;) an obſcure hamlet about three or four miles beyond Rocheſter, and ſituated in a little fertile valley, at the bottom of the huge chain of hills, or rather mountains, that give to this county its wild and pictureſque ſublimity. At the only houſe of entertainment in this retired and humble village, I had before taken up my temporary abode (for experience has taught me, that the peripatetic has nothing to expect but expence and inſolence in capital towns, and houſes on the frequented road;) and the civil treatment I met with from the reputable owners of the manſion, who unite the tripple avocations of the farmer, the blackſmith, and the publican, together with their moderate charges, and decent accommodation, determined me in a choice which my companions had reſigned to my diſcretion: and we arrived juſt time enough to be ſaluted with the

buſy

buſy voices of playful infants, ſporting and ſquabbling at large, in the full enjoyment of health, vivacity, and Liberty; free from all the dangers which, in towns and cities, render the unhappy being a ſlave and a priſoner from his infancy, and a premature victim to cares, anxieties, and ſorrows.

O! how ſweet, at the hour when, deep-bluſhing, appears
The ſun's ſwelling orb at the brink of the ſky,
And Eve, penſive Eve, bathes the vale with her tears,
And Zephyr, ſad Zephyr, expires in a ſigh—
O! how ſweet at this hour, when half-wearied with toil,
And each kind emotion awak'd in the breaſt
That Heav'n's varied bounties and Nature's gay ſmile
Ere ſtamp'd on the mind that by Fancy is bleſt—
O! how ſweet, at this hour, on the brow of ſome hill,
By ſide the clear brook, or embower'd in the vale,
Directed, perhaps, by the clack of the mill,
Or Milkmaid's blithe carol, who ſings o'er her pail,
To approach the lone hamlet, our labours to cloſe,
And ſhare the tir'd peaſant's contented repoſe!

O! how ſweet, when each warbler that trill'd from the ſpray,
Or to Heav'n's azure concave with rapture aſpir'd
(The tir'd pinion relax'd, huſh'd in ſilence the lay)
To the grove's covert ſhade with his mate has retir'd:
How ſweet, as around every cottage they play,
(As you wind thro' the lane or the meadow) to hear
The rude ruddy infants attune the wild lay!—
What chorus ſo ſweet to Humanity's ear?

—Sport

—Sport on, thoughtleſs babes! ah, yet ſport and be gay,
Enjoy the ſhort rapture, and hail the bright glow!
Nor reflect (twere in vain) on the heels of the day,
Tread Night and her ſhadows---tread Manhood and Woe!
Ah! too near is the time that your ſorrow aſſures---
When Toil and Affliction alone ſhall be yours!

But ſee from the furrow, the glebe, and the plough,
The peaſants return with the toil-ſullied brow:
To their reſt they return, to their ſcanty repaſt;
For the hour of refreſhment relieves them at laſt.
As hither with toil-wearied ſteps they repair,
Hark what liſps and what ſhouts their loud welcome declare;
While, their ſports broken off, how the innocents fly,
And claſp each hard hand with a tranſport of joy;
Or hang by the coat, as around them they throng,
And lend their ſmall efforts to drag them along.
Each grief theſe endearments from memory blot,
And the cares of the day, and its toils are forgot;
Till again to their dames, o'er their ſcantling of ale,
As they eat their brown bread, they ſupply the ſhort tale:
Then to bed they retire, their adventures to cloſe,
To taſte (be they ſweet!) the ſhort boons of repoſe;
While the wealthy and proud in mad riot and joy
The fruits of their labour and hardſhips deſtroy.

Now ſilence ſucceeds to the buſtle of day,
And the Moon's ſilver orb to the Sun's ruddy beam;
Awhile thro' the dews let me penſively ſtray,
And indulge ſoothing Fancy awhile in her dream.
While the Nightingale trills, your ſweet minſtrel divine!
Let me pierce, O ye Fays! your ſequeſter'd retreat;
With your Shakeſpeare, your Colins, your Fletcher recline;
Your revels enjoy, and your fables repeat.

Ah,

Ah, why are ye fled, gentle Fays! from the Muſe,
Whoſe ſongs ye adorn'd, and whoſe leſſons improv'd?
Are ye ſcar'd that ſtern critics their ſanction refuſe?---
Dull ſpectres of Night by malignity mov'd!
Ah, ſcorn their dark malice; renew the wild ſtrain;
And give us our Fletchers and Shakeſpeares again.

Such-- ſuch are my joys, in lone hamlet retir'd,
When the toil of the day, and its pleaſures are o'er.--
Or, perhaps, with the throng by *rude Nature* inſpir'd
I ſhare the blithe cup, and their feelings explore.
Ah! little ye know, who, envelop'd by pride,
Alone the dull paſtimes of Grandeur behold,
What life, and what fancy, and humour reſide
In theſe circles of Mirth by no Faſhion control'd.
How oft have I ſmil'd ('twas the ſmile of the heart,
Not the ſimper of Form, by Hypocriſy taught;
The maſk of dull Cuſtom, the effort of Art
To eſcape, but in vain, from the torture of Thought.)
How oft have I ſmil'd, their ſhrewd maxims to hear,
And ſee the ſtrong traits of wild Nature appear!

Let the proud and the weak, then, the dull and the great,
Who loll in their coaches in indolent ſtate,
Who, idle at home, but for idleneſs ſtray,
And abroad only prize what's at home every day---
Let to theſe the proud Inn yield its ſplendour and down,
And the Country repeat the dull pleaſures of Town.
Let me, whom each pleaſure eccentric can move,
Who would travel to *know*, and would live to *improve*,
When at eve my tir'd limbs relaxation require,
To ſome ſnug little thatch, in ſome hamlet, retire;
Where, the cravings of Nature content to ſupply,
I may hear, or may join in the hind's ruſtic joy---

May Man in his varied conditions compare,
And learn the hard lot which too many muſt bear;
That thus, as with all I alternately blend,
The *mind* may expand, and the *heart* may amend;
Till, embracing Mankind in one girdle of Love,
In Nature's kind leſſon I daily improve,
And (no haughty diſtinctions to fetter my ſoul)
As the brother of all, learn to feel for the whole.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

6 NO 63